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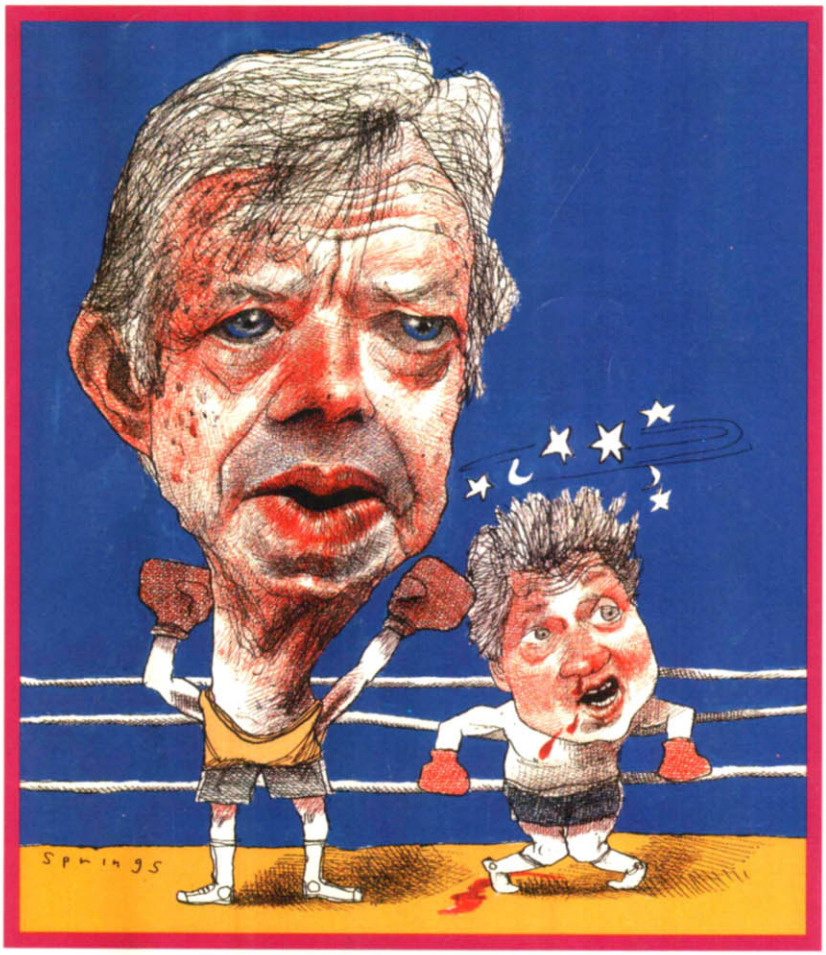

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What are the facts?

A Denial of Reality: Despite decisive military defeats in the wars that they have launched against the Jewish state, the Arabs deny the existence of the country that has inflicted such severe and repeated punishment on them. When it becomes inevitable to mention the Jewish state at all it is insolently referred to only as "the Zionist entity". This non-acknowledgement of Israel's existence is not simply a matter of semantics. Arab maps do not show Israel, but a vast area labeled as "Palestine". Cities such as Tel Aviv and Haifa simply don't exist. Arab school children have no "official" knowledge of the existence of Israel. Schedules of foreign airlines that show Israel on their route maps or that list Israeli destinations are not allowed in most Arab countries. Foreign publications print special editions for the Arab countries, since no publication carrying advertising of Israeli firms may appear in those countries. And, of course, tourists of any nationality may not enter most Arab countries if their passports show evidence that the holders have ever visited Israel, the "non-existent country".

Israel Exists because it Exists: As an inducement to Israel for yielding lands that are absolutely indispensable for the country's defense, the "West Bank" and the Golan Heights, the Arabs now and then offer the possibility of the "recognition" of Israel's existence. The sad and almost incomprehensible aspect of that is that many well-meaning people in the U.S.,and in other countries believe that this might be an acceptable bargain for Israel. But it's a self-defeating exercise. Israel's existence is in no way dependent on the recognition of any Arab state. It's simple: Israel exists because it exists. Therefore, suppose that meaningful meetings came about between Israel and an Arab country, and suppose that an Arab diplomat would ask what Israel would be prepared to "give" if that Arab country would consider acknowledging Israel's existence. Israel should reply that it in turn would consider acknowledging that Arab country's existence. Or, Israel could declare a boycott of the Arab world and could offer to relax or to rescind such boycott in consideration of parallel gestures by that Arab country.

> "Israel's existence is in no way dependent on the recognition of any Arab state. It's simple: Israel exists because it exists."

The bizarre concept of Israel's "non-existence" has been around for over forty years. Many have been led to believe that Israel should bring substantial sacrifices, so as to get the Arabs to acknowledge Israel's existence. It is often said that Israel needs to be "recognized" by the Arabs in order to "normalize her condition". But need not the Arabs, too, live in "normalized conditions"? And Israel is often promised that, in return for yielding vital strategic territory to the Arabs, she would be assured of "safe and secure borders". But don't the Arabs also need borders that are safe and secure? The Arab countries have come to believe that peace is only good and desirable for Israel. But it is surely at least as important for the Arabs, who have lived through five wars with Israel—the "non-existent country". Peace and prosperity can and will come to this troubled region only when the Arabs accept the reality of Israel's existence and negotiate with her in good faith.

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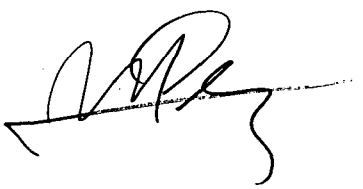
ABOUT THIS MONTH

by

Wladyslaw Pleszczynski

PRESIDENT BILL CAME TO WASHINGTON with big plans for himself and the nation, but nothing is going according to plan. His world continues to unravel, and the more farcical his performance the greater the likelihood it will end in tragedy. In early July he traveled to the G-7 summit in Japan, and against all precedent in an allied country immediately began courting the opponents of the host government. Like a drunkenly excited child allowed to stay up late with the grownups, he assumed he was the center of attention and never did shut up or stop mugging for the cameras. Even his visit to Korea's DMZ he couldn't resist turning into the latest profile of his own courage. At the *Arizona* Memorial, he relived *Tora! Tora! Tora!* The next day he tossed frisbees at the beach and frolicked in the Hawaiian surf. Ratings down, he rushed to Des Moines to hug a few victims of the Mississippi floods, before sneaking off to Arkansas for another lost college weekend of crashing at friends' houses and changing clothes in the car. When a lifelong friend and key administration official evidently committed suicide a few days later, Bill's reaction was to insist at every turn that "no one can ever know why this happened." Within a week, details began to emerge suggesting the very opposite. No one was blaming Bill, mind you, but his incredible defensiveness raised more questions about his insecurity than it answered about Vince Foster's death.

IMMATURITY IN A PRESIDENT IS AN invitation to disaster. As William McGurn (page 24) and Stuart Reid (page 26) report, the Clinton presidency already seems to be leaving our country with fewer allies in the world. Imagine how worried that makes our enemies feel. On June 14, Brit Hume of ABC was the unwitting instigator of President Clinton's most memorable show of adolescent pique. Now Mr. Hume tells us what his admirers and critics thought of the episode (see page 22). R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr. (page 12) and Tom Bethell (page 16) expose the deceptions of the so-called Clinton budget. To paraphrase Mr. Bethell, it figures that under Clinton a spending increase of more than $300 billion is being called a cut! So ridiculous have things become that P. J. O'Rourke has interrupted his New England summer to call for a major reassessment of a previously failed Democratic presidency (page 18). Let's just hope we're still laughing at the end of this one.



P. S.: Speaking of interrupted summers, don't you dare let Labor Day pass without reading Richard W. Carlson's scintillating "Frostie's Revenge" (page 30), a timeless reminder that our political classes don't hold a monopoly on the nation's low life.

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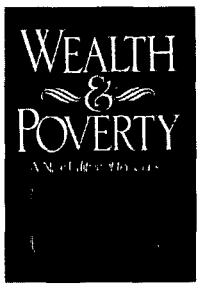

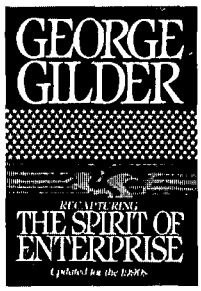

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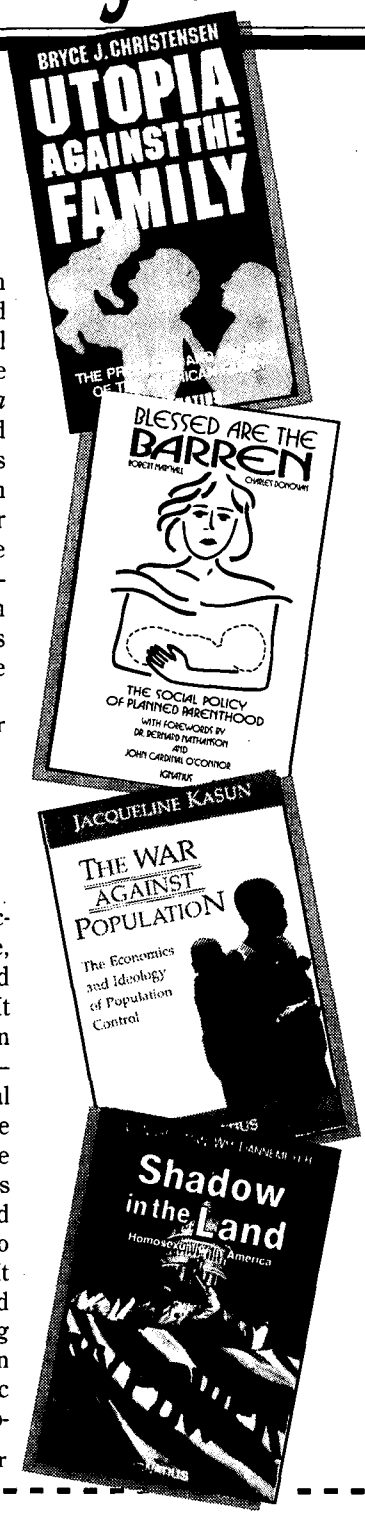
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• July brought a gratifying hiatus in the Clinton highjinks. Boy Clinton's schizophrenic budget of increased spending and "deficit cuts" inched through a dazed congressional negotiating seance. Nonetheless, its passage is being esteemed very auspicious, even as the resultant recession will be appraised very mysterious. And there was other reassuring news: no more attempts were made to turn Air Force I into a beauty parlor for that big, loveable lug some call Mr. President; at the G-7 meeting in Tokyo, Mr. Clinton came off as a diplomatic colossus, his only reported gaffe being his lamentable practice of addressing the wife of South Korean President Kim Young Sam by the wrong name; the White House's internal report on *l'affaire Travelgate* admittedly implicated one of the president's cracker cousins and a Hollywood huckster in abusing their authority and ill-using the FBI, but so low have Washington ethics declined that no one was canned. None of our rustic president's other hitherto unknown siblings has turned up from jerkwater, and brother Roger remains free of the hoosegow. Best of all, the Boy President's embarrassment over sodomites in the military was assuaged when the Joint Chiefs of Staff accepted a compromise on their homosexual ban.

• Yet, even in blissful July, multiple bizarreries accumulated, leaving seasoned observers with the sense that the Clinton administration is actually a gigantic reenactment of *The Big Chill*, that 1983 film of yuppie middle-aged crisis, apostasy, and hustle. *The Big Chill* begins with a party of phony 1960s revolutionaries now crapulent with bourgeois acquisitions gathering for the funeral of one of their college chums, who has taken his own life. For two days they ruefully reminisce late into the night, regretting their departed revolutionary ardor, crying, laughing, and fornicating. On July 20, deputy White House counsel Vincent Foster, Jr., late of Hillary Clinton's Rose Law Firm and boyhood friend of Bill, took his life in a park overlooking Washington, and for the next couple of days his old chums gathered. Down in Little Rock, President Clinton eulogized Mr. Foster as "one of the best and the brightest," with whom the Clintons were wont to pass long evenings "listening to music and drinking spirits [sic] and being incredibly silly [sic, again]." To the *Washington Post*, Mr. Clinton elaborated: "We've been up real late two nights in a row now, remembering and crying and laughing." Did he say "laughing"? Do the bereaved laugh after a suicide—not an ordinary death, a suicide? This whole White House crowd, every yuppie one of them, has had his life scripted in Hollywood by the disciples of Freud and Jung and Erich Fromm. As to Mr. Foster's motives for dispatching himself, the president iterates, "I don't think there is anything more to know." It is a line he reiterates with growing desperation, while Washington echoes with rumors of Mr. Foster's intimacy with Hillary, his intimacy with various ham-fisted White House political maneuvers, and his stewardship over the Clintons' finances. On July 23 the venerable *New York Post* reported that "two major business deals linked to the former firm of White House lawyer Vincent Foster, Jr. are under investigation by three federal investigators."

• Mr. Don Henley, the environmental activist and former drummer for the Eagles, evoked a fortissimo of boos at the Milwaukee, Wisconsin Summerfest when he made bold to dedicate a non-threatening, aurally hygienic, and generally imbecilic song to our Boy President—and to his surprise. He then sang "It's Not Easy Being Green," a song applicable to the entire Clinton administration, though it originated with Kermit the frog. On July 14 Mr. Bob Hattoy, the White House's career homosexual, startled theater-goers at the Kennedy Center when, during a scene of Homosexual Revelation in *The Twilight of the Golds*, he leaped from his seat in in the president's box and applauded lustily. No one else did, and as all heads turned upwards toward the triumphant wanker in our president's box, a wave of hisses ensued, along with at least one embarrassed nose blow. In suburban Paris, that which Mrs. Denise Bisson had beheld imbedded in her lawn and assumed to be a stupendous piece of modern sculpture turned out to be a frozen corpse, most likely the tragic droppings of an aeroplane in whose landing gear the unfortunate wretch had attempted to stow away. One of London's leading advocates of ancient Chinese herbal medicines, Dr. David Atherton, apprised BBC listeners that some Chinese herbal remedies for eczema contain steroid cream—a "filthy trick" that, adjudges the indignant British purist.

• The Midwest soaked under some of the worst flooding since Noah, and on July 15 police in Los Angeles arrested four members of the Fourth Reich Skin Heads for conspiring to perpetrate the most flagitious White Supremacist plot since the Republicans put Mr. W. Horton to their evil purposes back in 1988. Yet progressives continue to strive against Bush-Reaganism, and the *New York Times* on July 22 reported that the president of Florida State University, Mr. Dale W. Lick, was in danger of losing his bid to become president of Michigan State University, owing to his 1989 public profanation that "a black athlete can actually outjump a white athlete on the average, so they're better at the game [basketball]." "Many students, faculty members, state officials," the *Times* reports, thought that utterance, "at the very least, insensitive." Which race is embarrassed about its jumping skill, America's newspaper of record did not say. Proof of the woes organized labor suffers these days came in San Diego, when the famed topless dancers at Pacer's rejected Local 30 of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union, and in London it was no go for Mrs. Julie Amiri, the 35-year-old 300-pounder who, upon being arrested for shoplifting, sought exculpation by telling the court that shoplifting was the only way she could achieve orgasm. She was fined $150.

• From historic Newberry, Michigan, comes more evidence in support of the Big Bang theory of creation. On July 12, an

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abandoned ranger headquarters at Tahquamenon Falls State Park blew sky-high, sending debris a hundred feet into the atmosphere and alarming campers fourteen miles away. The explosion now has been traced to bat manure that for decades had been generating methane gas until in mid-July it became highly volatile and—*kaboom!* Scientists believe that a similar cataclysm eight million years ago gave us the beginnings of the universe, though even scientists cannot account for those early bats, and for those of a religious disposition a world created by bat dung is too depressing to contemplate. In other religious news, Mr. George Yoerger, a substitute mail carrier in Moville, Iowa, refused to deliver *Time* and *Newsweek* magazines to the 301 persons on his route after deciding—not without reason!—that both magazines contained "sinful" material. He has been asked to seek other employment. And police in New York City arrested Mr. Kenneth D. Moreson, 36, after he stole three quarts of oil from a service station and poured the liquid over his person to "ward off evil spirits." His bond was a mere $5,000, a pittance that the less fortunate captain of the *Exxon Valdez* must envy.

• In another attempt to deter auto theft, the government of Yemen had four thieves beheaded. There has been a four-fold increase in beheadings in Saudi Arabia, causing the pecksniffs of Amnesty International to issue another of their namby-pamby remonstrances. London's authoritative *ES* magazine reported that a Miami surgeon, Dr. Harold Reed, has been practicing with exquisite skill and handsome remuneration ($2,000) Augmentation Phalloplasty, or penile elongation. According to *ES*, "length is increased by up to one and three-quarter inches by snipping the [now redundant] suspensory ligament at the base of the penis." Hence, just possibly, the Saudis could evade Amnesty International's pique were they to substitute the word "beheading" with "snipping." In Leipzig, Germany, the late Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's 228-year-old champagne bill at Auerbach's tavern has been paid. The Hon. Patricia Schroeder continues to be the target of conspiracy fomented by members of the United States Navy. The widely respected *New York Times* reports that members of the Navy have been distributing "T-shirts emblazoned with lewd statements about Representative Patricia Schroeder," and she does not think they are very nice. The *Times*'s report would not divulge the content of those statements, and at this writing our crack team of investigative reporters has not been able to locate any of the offending T-shirts, though somehow when thinking of Rep. Schroeder, "Nosebleed of the United States House of Representatives," as she is called, it is hard to come up with any lewd thoughts whatsoever.

• And in Washington there is growing concern that the Clinton administration might be history's first government to be overthrown not by a violent coup but by an uprising of laughter—millions of freedom-loving Americans marching on Washington carrying banners emblazoned with jokes and caricatures of the oafs in government. On the evening of July 24, Drs. Donna Shalala and Joycelyn Elders, the administration's leading champions of the noble condom, were asked by the editor of this journal for an autographed condom as they passed his table at The Palm restaurant. Everyone laughed, but neither lady had one on her. Call it Condomgate!

—*RET*

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NAACCCP Update

Here is an update on the subject of Communists and ex-Communists in the "new" NAACP (see my "NAACCCP," *TAS*, August 1993). Benjamin Chavis's choice for director of communications of the national NAACP is no less than Don Rojas, who was press chief under Maurice Bishop, the Communist dictator of Grenada, and lived several years in Cuba. Rojas then moved on to become editor of the *New York Amsterdam News*, published by the notoriously Jew-baiting Wilbert Tatum.

"We are bringing new energy, talent, and life to the NAACP," Chavis says.

—Stephen Schwartz
San Francisco, California

He's My Brother

Two of my brothers were subjects of Daniel Wattenberg's piece in your June 1993 publication ("Clinton's Echo Chamber"), with brother Bill being the main target. He can ably respond for himself on the political matters, if he chooses. I will respond on the reference to our mentally retarded 47-year-old brother Jack.

Jack has made a number of visits to Washington over the years. His brother Bill arranged those trips and escorted him proudly, with great love and attention. Only the *Spectator* has seen fit to try to tarnish what has always been a fun experience for Jack, Bill, our family, and those who met Jack in Washington.

I would also point out that our family members, including Bill, myself, his legal guardian and brother Tom, and others of the original eleven total children, frequently "speak retarded," adopting or warmly "impersonating" Jack's speech limitation. It's a language not taught in foreign language schools, but it helps us communicate and we will continue to use it. We would be happy to so educate Mr. Wattenberg.

In a society which unfortunately can still shun the handicapped, it is especially troubling that sincere brotherly love and attention can be cruelly attacked. Can't Mr. Wattenberg find more accurate things to write?

—Peter D. Archey
Reading, Pennsylvania

Daniel Wattenberg replies:

I never questioned Bill Archey's love for his brother Jack. Rather, I tried to explain how, despite his manifest lack of brotherly love for supply-siders and other species of conservatives ("wackos," he calls them), he had risen to influential positions in the conservative Reagan administration and the once pro-market U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

I certainly did not mean to tarnish Jack's visits to Washington. I wasn't even aware of them. If Bill Archey and the Chamber would just get to their battle stations and beat back the Clinton tax hike, then I am sure that Jack and other members of the Archey family could afford to visit more often.

Bill's efforts to "speak retarded" to communicate with Jack sound commendable. But in the anecdote I related in my article, he adopted his brother's manner of speech to communicate to colleagues in the Reagan Commerce Department his disgust over Reagan's cuts in social spending.

I did, by the way, seek an interview with Bill Archey, and he chose not to respond—in any language.

Raining on *Parade*

Terry Eastland's catalogue of paeans to Mrs. Clinton ("Counting the Days," *TAS*, July 1993) omitted the full-issue puff piece done by Dotson Rader in *Parade* magazine last April. On May 10, gossip columnist Liz Smith reported:

> The huge-circulation newspaper supplement is now buried under thousands of readers' letters. A random sampling of the first 1,000 left *Parade* staffers stunned. The mails run about 88 percent against the current First Lady, with a vituperation level that surprises and shocks even the most cynical. Can this be the beginning of an "Annus Horribilis" for Mrs. Clinton?

With any luck.

—Blair Hunter
Bradenton, Florida

Bogus Charlie

Grover G. Norquist has done conservative Democrats a favor; he has exposed Charlie Stenholm ("Bogus Charlie Stenholm," *TAS*, August 1993). . . .

Conservative and moderate Democratic voters do not need people like Charlie Stenholm leading and abandoning the true conservative and moderate Democrats in Congress. They need the leadership of someone who is willing to break with the straight party line if principles and constituents demand it. The Democrats need a leader like Rep. Gary Condit of California, who voted against Clinton's higher taxes—at the risk of incurring the wrath of the liberal leadership and losing his subcommittee chairmanship. . . .

—Valerie Shank
Austin, Texas

Wit's End

P. J. O'Rourke's "Liberty Manifesto" (*TAS*, July 1993) was truly an inspiring piece of wit-drenched truth. Even though the target is as large as the broad side of a barn, Mr. O'Rourke uses laser-like focus when he blasts away at the Occupying Couple and their entourage.

I'd gladly not join the millions of "uncommitted inactivists" in their "non-march on Washington" to remind people to just leave well enough alone.

Since I don't actually have to show up for this non-march, that saves me the guilt of making up some lame excuse why I can't make it. Instead, I can proudly boast that I chose to get on with my life rather than attend a march on Washington.

As I eagerly await the next issue of *TAS*, I am not actively painting any protest signs. Nor am I engaging in any leaflet distribution at my local mini-mall. Instead, I am going to bed early tonight . . . I have to work tomorrow.

— David Blumenthal
Lincoln Park, New Jersey

In his recent speech to the Cato Institute, P. J. O'Rourke comes perilously close to surrendering his credentials as a Republican party reptile. His "less is more" theme in regard to the size of government runs counter to the "more is more" philosophy of our last Republican president and his secretary of housing and urban development. (Jack, please call home!)

In fact, one might even vilify P.J. so far as to call him a latent Libertarian! His "two rules of government" certainly

(continued on page 84)

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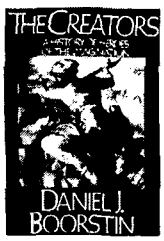

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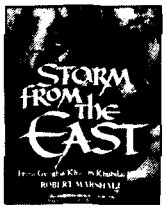

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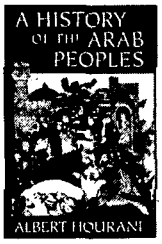

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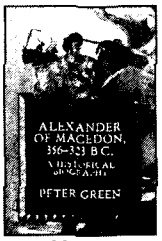

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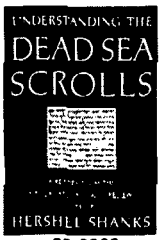

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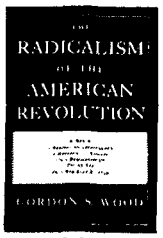

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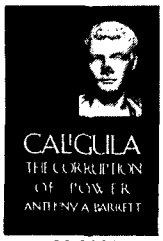

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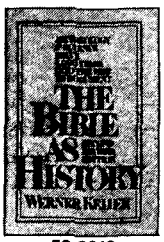

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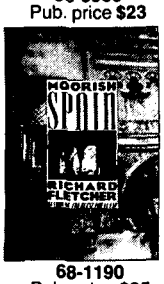

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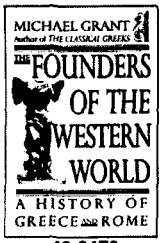

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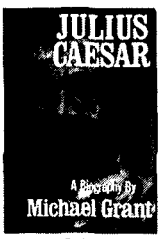

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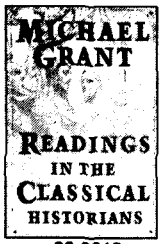

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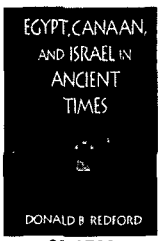

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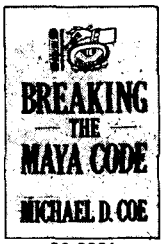

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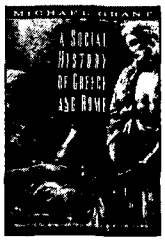

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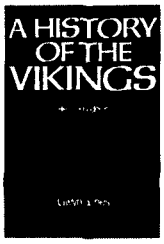

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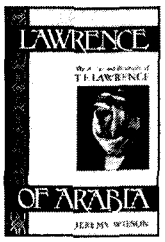

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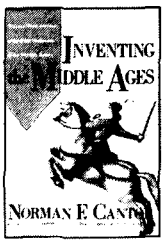

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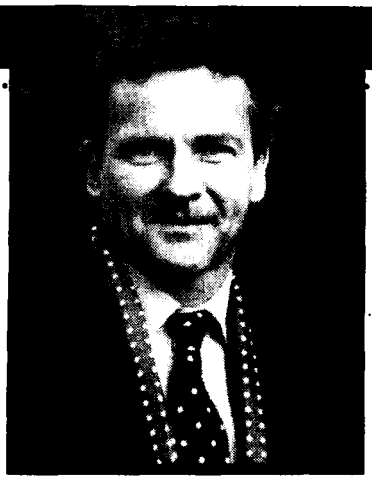

Dead Wrong

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Everything Bill Clinton believes about the economy is wrong. He believes that by raising taxes he will cut the deficit. That will lower interest rates. This will spur economic activity. But of course, and the cow will jump over the moon.

Actually, in recent years no evidence has been found to support this belief—though animal-rights advocates might have data on that saltant cow. What is more, our president believes that by raising marginal tax rates he can ensure a specific level of increased government revenue—again his belief is bereft of evidence. In fact, the evidence is to the contrary. Finally, he believes he can lower the federal deficit while increasing federal spending. That belief suggests that our Boy President suffers schizophrenia.

Allow me to go a step further: everything Bill Clinton believes about government is wrong. He believes that government can create prosperity. The evidence is that government depletes prosperity. He believes that government can select promising enterprises in the private sector and make them even more successful. The evidence is that governments engaged in this futile endeavor are inevitably lobbied into sustaining economic duds while impeding promising enterprises.

And more: he believes that government can coerce all Americans into abiding national planning. For the last thirty years growing numbers of "minorities" have been successfully exempting themselves from government planning. Ironically, advocates of big government such as the Clintons have wrecked big government by expanding its list of special interests: blacks, women, gays, Hispanics, the disabled, and on into anarchy.

Now, even if interest rates were to decline attendant to a declining deficit, whence will come the money for economic growth? According to Clinton, his tax collectors are going to sop up vast amounts of investment capital in one of the Republic's largest peacetime tax increases. Yet he assures us that soaking the rich alone achieves $187 billion in revenues to be placed against the federal deficit. Alas, recent experience shouts *fortissimo* that, when government raises taxes, it fails to get the revenues it anticipates. As the *Wall Street Journal* reported in July, after the Bush tax increase, tax receipts from the rich *fell* for the first time since the mid-1980s. In fact, the wealthy paid $6.5 billion less in taxes in 1991, and the middle class paid $3.3 billion more. According to IRS reports, those making $200,000 or more paid 6.1 percent less in federal income tax, while tax receipts from everyone else increased 1 percent. The rich are not as ignorant of economics as our politicians. When marginal taxes become excessive, the rich either shelter their income from the taxpayer or simply work less.

This is not a recent phenomenon. Throughout the 1980s, in fact, the percentage of tax receipts collected from the upper one percent rose considerably, due to declining marginal rates. With Clinton's huge tax increase now being negotiated in Washington, then, there will come no great increase in revenue from the rich. The increase will come from the rest of us or not at all. My guess is that the increase will come not at all, and that the deficit will grow. That is what happened when Mr. Bush raised taxes and when the Washington wizards of tax

Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Times *column syndicated by Creators Syndicate.*

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CONSERVATIVE CHRONICLE $1.50

Vol. 8, Number 7 Hampton, Iowa Wednesday, Feb. 17, 1993

Oops, There Goes Another Myth About Taxes, Middle Class

Read Donald Lambro's column on page 1.

LET'S SEE... SHALL THIS ONE BE A NEW GAS TAX, OR A BIG CUT IN SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS?...

GAYS IN THE MILITARY

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CONSERVATIVE CHRONICLE

PATRICK BUCHANAN

GOP forfeited its opportunity

TOPIC INDEX

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& spend prevailed temporarily on Ronald Reagan.

Yet our Boy President today bravely enters the same trap. Mr. Bush's melange of increased government regulation and higher taxes effectively ended America's longest period of peacetime prosperity. It sent the economy into a brief recession and a painfully slow recovery. In 1992, candidate Clinton believed we were living through a prolonged recession. At times he believed we were in depression. But then, as aforestated, everything Bill Clinton believes about economics is wrong.

Today he travels the land, asserting that the mere hint of his marvelous budget is responsible for declining interest rates, hence economic growth. What growth? The mere hint of his budget has induced economic slowdown from 4.7 percent in the last quarter of 1992 to 0.7 percent in this year's first quarter.

Moreover, interest rates have not been going down because of Clinton's schizophrenic budget of increased taxes ($250 billion over the next five years!) and increased spending ($300 billion the next five years!). As Ambrose Evans-Pritchard of London's *Sunday Telegraph* notes, American interest rates are declining as a consequence of (1) global deflation, (2) declining interest rates world-wide, and (3) a restrictive (too restrictive?) monetary policy decided upon by the Fed last year. Once again, President Clinton is wrong, but then everything he believes about the economy is wrong. ❐

The Mysterious Death of Vince Foster

This is the weirdest presidency I have observed. It is entirely possible on the testimony of the President that his deputy White House counsel, Vincent Foster, Jr., met with foul play on July 20. He is dead now, and from all that we have heard about him murder cannot be ruled out. Yet people in the White House have decided that this shocking ending to a successful, happy public life is only going to be investigated by the federal Park Police, not the FBI. Earlier, a Justice Department official had promised an investigation "to find out what the factors were—if it was a suicide—that led to him killing himself." But now the president is leaving Foster's death to the Park Police, keepers of parks and forests, patrollers of revelers and vagrants—but police with no demonstrated competence in forensics.

Foster left Arkansas six months ago to serve his boyhood friend Bill Clinton in the White House. Before that he had been a prominent lawyer at Little Rock's politically hyperactive Rose Law Firm, as had Hillary Rodham Clinton and two other powerful government officials—an uncommonly high number from one law firm. Somehow, late on the afternoon of July 20, after disappearing from the White House for five unexplained hours, he found his way into Fort Marcy Park, off the George Washington Parkway a few miles from the White House, and soon was dead. At this writing, it is unknown where Foster got the 80-year-old revolver that did him in, or where he was for the five hours before his death.

Among other things, I find it odd that he would have discovered this particular park. For several years I have whizzed by it en route to my home. Until Foster's death I never thought to enter it. Why would a very busy newcomer from Arkansas find it interesting? Scores of local places are more alluring. After Foster's body was found I made my first stop. It is an eerie place. Huge walls of grim trees and tall shrubs enshroud it. Supposedly it is a stop-off for dubious liaisons. I can believe it. My second visit there was no more cheerful. It is a curious place for a top White House aide to enter, even for a suicide.

In the days that immediately followed Foster's death, the president and his aides all reported their amazement and, of course, their grief. Foster had been extremely close to the Clintons through all their endless campaigns. He had handled campaign funds and family funds. He, Hillary, and another Rose Law Firm colleague, associate director of the Justice Department Webster Hubbell, were involved in an unusual stock partnership, Midlife Investments. In the White House he had been involved with sensitive matters, some controversial (e.g., Travelgate) and some more commonplace (e.g. the First Family's blind trust). "We've been up real late two nights in a row now," the president told a reporter, "remembering and crying and laughing and talking about him, and I don't think there is anything else."

But there was. After so many unnecessary claims that nothing was amiss before Foster's death, it now turns out that associates feared he was depressed. What is more, a week after Foster's death the White House admitted that the president, too, was concerned about Foster, and had made a heretofore undisclosed twenty-minute telephone call to him the night before his mysterious death in Fort Marcy Park. Why this confusion? Or is a more accurate word deceit? There are times when one gets the sense that this administration of aging 1960s coat-and-tie radicals is a gigantic reenactment of *The Big Chill*, that 1983 film of yuppie middle-aged crisis, emotional and ideological burnout—it began when the suicide of one member of a close-knit group of college friends brought them all home to reflect.

During President Clinton's affecting eulogy in Little Rock on July 23, Americans were under the impression that a thorough investigation at the highest level was underway. The administration had not been slow to bring in the FBI to investigate its White House travel office. It should summon the FBI to investigate this mysterious death. Nothing in Foster's private life suggested suicide. He had been involved in delicate political dealings for the president of the United States. No suicide note has been found. His dealings at the Rose Law Firm were supposedly under scrutiny. Is this true? What is the truth? No high White House aide has died under such mysterious circumstances in this century, and the Park Police are handling it? But then this is a very weird presidency. ❐

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— President Ronald Reagan

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The Poisoned Chalice Revisited

by Tom Bethell

Somehow, I had assumed that wily Democrats would resist swallowing the same medicine they encouraged George Bush to take in 1990. The bottle, of course, is misleadingly labeled Deficit Reduction. And it is poison. As I write, the House-Senate conference is still meeting, so there's a possibility that wisdom will prevail at the last minute. But I'm not holding my breath. For months, the media-politico consensus has been that the Clinton presidency will be fatally damaged if the plan is not enacted, that is, if more taxes are not imposed. Failing to place this new burden on the economy will show that Democrats "cannot govern," it is said. And rather than show such weakness, the Democrats have been hoisting the poisoned chalice to their own lips.

The purpose of the phrase "deficit reduction" is to avoid the more candid "tax increase," and at the same time to mislead voters into thinking that the change has something to do with reducing the federal budget. To that extent, the phrase is not only misleading but (I suspect) deliberately so. The budget is *not* being reduced. In a burst of candor, the *Washington Post* acknowledged that the budget changes will "strengthen government." As the accompanying chart shows, the defense budget is going down, but everything else is going up. Aggregate spending, or outlays, will increase in the next few years from $1,468 billion to $1,781 billion. Only in federal budgeting is an increase of more than $300 billion called a cut.

The Clinton economic plan has all along been an exercise in deception, with the news media acting as collaborators or dupes (take your pick). On April 8, the Office of Management and Budget published the 1994 federal budget. Prominently displayed on page two of the thick document were the "Budget Totals Reflecting the President's Proposals," shown here. The next day, major newspapers published full-page stories on the budget, but all failed to give the outlay and revenue totals. Since then, I have not seen these figures published in the news columns of any newspaper or magazine. (The *New York Times* did publish a chart that came close.)

It has become a convention among journalists that only the deficit, or "difference," should be published. The difference between what and what? We are rarely told. The failure to publish the totals, of course, disguises the extent to which they continue to rise. An uncritical Washington press corps has permitted Clinton to talk of "spending cuts" without publishing the numbers on which his claim is based. The projected outlay and revenue totals expose as absurd Clinton's claim that his "deficit reduction" is made up of equal parts tax increases and spending cuts.

Some may say that with the population and economy growing, government spending may be expected to increase. But a Congressional Budget Office analysis shows outlays as a percentage of GDP rising from 23.4 percent in 1993 to 24.1 percent in the year 2000. So it's not being reduced by that measure, either. Incidentally, 2000 is the first year in which outlays ($2,055 billion) are expected to exceed the number of the year. The fact is, spending is not being reined in.

"Spending cuts," in Washington parlance, merely means reductions in planned increases. According to John Cogan, deputy director of OMB in 1988-89, "The Ways and Means and Finance committees deliberately legislate future spending increases that they have no intention of granting, so that they can later reduce them and say they have 'cut the budget.'" Reporters employed in the Washington bureaus have plenty of space in which to expose this deception, yet they never do. Their repeated message has been a slavish echo of Leon Panetta: Clinton's budget, unlike those of his Republican predecessors, does not involve smoke and mirrors. Meanwhile journalists have to write about something, so they describe the "chemistry" between Rostenkowski and Moynihan—a non-story I have seen in print at least four times. (The subtext goes like this: "We love you Rosty, we love you Pat, but do you love one another enough to raise our taxes? The stakes are enormous!")

One of the few journalists who has done a good job of drawing attention to the smoke and mirrors in the Clinton budget is Rush Limbaugh. On July 9, he actually read some of these budget totals over the air. Unfortunately, his TV program was by then in summer recess. Otherwise, he said, he would have shown the chart on the screen, which really would have been a first. The TV networks have never been known to display budget totals—any more than *Time* or *Newsweek* have. All these news organizations make the mistake, as Limbaugh does not, of assuming that their audience is too dumb or uninterested to grasp such matters.

In late June, on TV and on radio, Limbaugh repeatedly pointed out one of the more intriguing features of the Clinton (alleged) $500 billion deficit reduction

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package: its remarkable similarity to the Bush (alleged) $500 billion deficit reduction package in 1990. I was glad to see *Wall Street Journal* columnist Gerald Seib following up on this point three weeks later. Clinton's plan, he wrote, is "uncomfortably similar to the 1990 package, which satisfied nobody . . ."

Seib detailed the similarity as follows: Bush's plan was meant to cut the deficit "largely by trimming defense spending, bumping up taxes in the top brackets, cutting about $44 billion in Medicare payments, capping some discretionary spending, putting a five-cent a gallon tax on gasoline and lowering interest payments on the debt." The Clinton plan would cut the deficit "largely by trimming defense spending, raising top tax rates, cutting about $50 billion in Medicare payments, capping some discretionary spending, putting about a five-cent a gallon tax on gasoline and lowering interest payments on the debt. Sound familiar?"

The similarity of the two plans is itself interesting, of course. The Clinton people have surely been taking their advice from the same people who told George Bush what to do in 1990. The two administrations, nominally representing different parties, have responded almost identically three years apart to phony budget crises that have been hoked up as an excuse to raise taxes. It's the triumph of the insiders, who desire to recentralize the economy following the supply-side "détente." It's the revenge of erstwhile commerce secretary and deficit-monger Pete Peterson and his bipartisan cabal.

Clinton has repeatedly derided "twelve years of Republican trickle-down economics," but he doesn't seem to realize that those twelve years were divided into eight (Reagan) and four (Bush), and that his own administration in retrospect will likely be regarded as having filled out the second (and final) term of the Bush-Clinton years. In his economic policy, Clinton is not so much a New Democrat as an Old Republican.

Gerald Seib went on to say that for the Clinton team, this similarity is "too close for comfort." Nonetheless, he mystifyingly concluded that "the 1990 deal's spending caps are working," and that Congress has now gone even further "by nicking away here and there at discretionary spending programs." The real problem, Seib thought, is that "a thoroughly cynical public isn't convinced that this is really happening."

Count me as a member of that cynical public. A month earlier, Seib thought the problem was that "millions of Americans" had been "demagogued into believing that the deficit can be wiped out magically with spending cuts that won't affect them." But defense spending affects millions of people, too, and if it can be cut (see table) why can't social spending also be cut? What's really going on is that the budget is being kept at about the same size, relative to GDP, but a chunk of it is being transferred from military to social spending. Journalists basically approve of this transfer, but prefer to disguise it with the emollient rhetoric of deficit reduction.

We might be a little less cynical, incidentally, if the Washington bureau of the *Wall Street Journal*, where Seib works, would publish the budget totals occasionally. At the time of the 1990 budget deal, fortunately, the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page published not just "the deficit" but a chart (put together by Paul Craig Roberts, published October 3, 1990) showing the actual budget totals, along with future spending plans.

BUDGET TOTALS REFLECTING PRESIDENT CLINTON'S $500 BILLION DEFICIT REDUCTION PROPOSAL

(in billions of dollars)

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Spending:	1468	1515	1574	1625	1690	1781
Receipts:	1146	1251	1328	1413	1476	1531
Deficit:	322	264	246	212	214	250
Defense Outlays:	277	264	258	252	234	239

[Above figures, purporting to show "equal parts spending cuts and tax increases," were published by OMB on April 8, 1993]

In the deal that in effect sank the Bush presidency, it was agreed that future budget outlays would be: *1993*: $1,381 billion. *1994*: $1,343 billion. *1995*: $1,385 billion. Compare those figures with the amounts that the government is *now* planning to spend in the same years, and you have a good measure of the extent to which the 1990 deal did not work. For example, in the fiscal year that starts in a couple of months (1994), spending will be $172 billion higher than George Bush thought it was going to be when he signed on to the deal.

All of which should give Clinton pause before embracing a very similar plan. If anything, this one will be more counterproductive than its predecessor because it imposes considerably higher tax rates on the most productive members of society, and will therefore put a more severe crimp in economic growth. Perhaps the greatest mistake that Clinton and his team have made is to believe that the appeal to envy orchestrated by a comparative handful of reporters, columnists, and editorial writers really does have broad appeal across the land. It does not. Normal people don't mind that others earn more than they do; in fact I suspect that even many of those on the dole realize that if such people didn't exist, they might have to seek employment. It's the upper-middle-class lefties—people like Michael Kinsley and the editorial writers of the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*—who seem peculiarly addicted to the vice of envy, and perpetually try to arouse it in others.

The Democrats have now embraced the pain-and-suffering ideology that repeatedly hurt the Republicans. The economic plan that is on the verge of enactment will not reduce the deficit, will not yield the revenues predicted, and certainly will not create jobs. It will create an opportunity for Republicans, if they know how to exploit it. ❐

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P. J. O'Rourke

100 Reasons Why Jimmy Carter Was a Better President Than Bill Clinton

Insights compiled with the kind assistance of the patrons of the Zoo Bar on Connecticut Avenue, N.W.

1. Jimmy Carter had a nicer wife,
2. A smarter baby brother,
3. A less frightening mom,
4. And a . . . No, we can't bring ourselves to make fun of the first daughter, especially since some of us have been going through an awkward adolescent stage for nearly four decades. But we can say: "Damn it, Hillary, quit fussing with *your* hair and do something about Chelsea's."
5. And, speaking of coiffures, Jimmy Carter never in his life got a haircut that cost more than $2.50, if appearances are anything to go by.
6. Carter had governed a more important state.
7. Carter had once held a job.
8. He came from a more cosmopolitan hometown,
9. And had a more charismatic vice president.
10. It took Carter months to wreck the economy.
11. It took Carter weeks to become a national laughingstock.
12. Carter committed adultery only in his heart.
13. And, if we know anything about female tastes, Carter was telling the truth about that.
14. As for military record, Carter was, comparatively speaking, a regular Audie Murphy.
15. They were on drugs during the Carter administration—they had an excuse.
16. *We* were on drugs during the Carter administration—*we* had an excuse.
17. Carter looked—think back carefully, we promise we're

P. J. O'Rourke is the author of The Bachelor Home Companion, Give War a Chance, Holidays in Hell, *and* Parliament of Whores.

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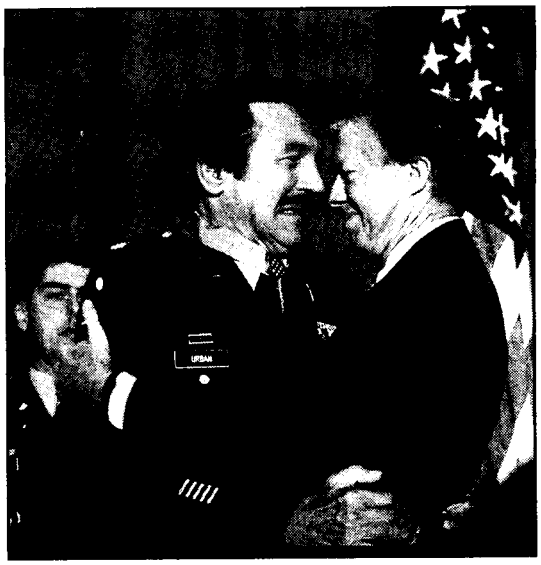
telling the truth about this—less foolish in his jogging outfit.

18. Jogging actually *worked* for Carter. Say what you want against the man, he's no double-butt.
19. Carter passed out while jogging and the nation was safe for a moment.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST:

Carter Administration	*Clinton Administration*
20. Pardoning draft dodgers	Draft dodgers
21. Women integrated into the military	Men dressed like women integrated into the military
22. Return of canal to Panama	Return of Haitians to Haiti
23. Bail-out of Chrysler Corp.	Jobs in White House travel office for hick cousins from Arkansas
24. Creation of Departments of Energy and Education	Can't find enough gay disabled women of color to head the Departments he's got already
25. President successfully treated for hemorrhoids	Hillary still heading health-care reform panel
26. Russians in Afghanistan	Brit Hume in White House press corps
27. Jody Powell with feet on desk	George Stephanopoulos with feet not quite touching floor
28. Kidding Mexicans about Montezuma's revenge	Kidding Mexicans about NAFTA
29. Boycott of Moscow Olympics	Not seeing much of the Blood-worth-Thomasons lately
30. Hostage rescue attempt in Iran	Trying to get Zoë Baird confirmed at Justice
31. Mount St. Helens	Air Force General Harold Campbell
32. Peace between Israel and Egypt	Peace between the FBI and IRS
33. Elvis dead	Barbra Streisand all too lively
34. SALT II	U2
35. Three Mile Island	Sam Nunn
36. Admiral Hyman Rickover	The Tidybowl man
37. Wimping out in the face of the second most powerful military force in the world	Wimping out in the face of Slobodan Milosevic
38. Gas shortage	Gassiest administration since who knows when
39. Mariel Boatlift	Which one is she? Does Hillary know about this one?
40. Proposition 13	(Write your own Clinton libido joke in the space provided ____ _____)

41. Carter was a good man to have on board when your canoe was attacked by a swimming rabbit.
42. Carter hardly ever hugged or kissed anyone in public except Leonid Brezhnev.
43. The FBI didn't kill anybody at Jonestown.
44. Bert Lance could make a bigger splash doing a cannonball into the Camp David pool than Webb Hubbell.
45. Hamilton Jordan could beat Mack McLarty at arm wrestling.
46. Plus Jordan could get into Studio 54.
47. Joseph Califano was prettier than Donna Shalala.
48. And he opposed abortion (though maybe he hadn't met Donna yet).



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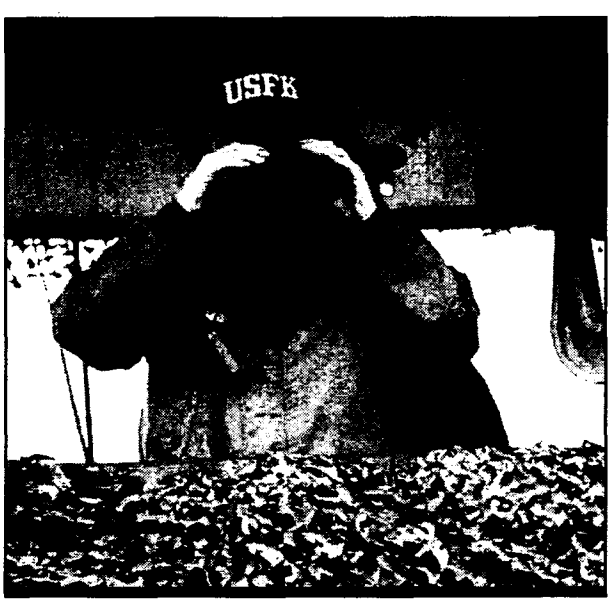

49. Warren Christopher was young and full of pep during the Carter administration.
50. And Warren Christopher's initials look funnier on a brief case than Cyrus Vance's did.
51. Zbigniew Brzezinski is worth more points in a Scrabble game than Anthony Lake.
52. Jimmy Carter didn't play any Fleetwood Mac songs on the campaign trail,
53. Or any Judy Collins records at home,
54. Or any saxophones anywhere.

55. **THE UNDEAD**

Carter Administration	*Clinton Administration*
Miss Lillian	VAT

56. No one can say a word against a Carter Supreme Court appointee.
57. Carter did not use Bloomsbury, Mayfair, Pall Mall, Hackney, Notting Hill, Shoreditch, or any other London neighborhood as the name of his child.
58. One thing about Carter-era inflation, the money may have been worthless but at least we had some.

59. **ENDANGERED SPECIES**

Carter Administration	*Clinton Administration*
The Snail Darter	The DLC

60. Jimmy Carter's nervous smirk was less demanding of a punch in the snoot, even if it did present a larger target.

MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY QUESTIONS

	Carter Administration	*Clinton Administration*
61.	Should Red China have a seat in the U.N.?	Is Macedonia what Macedonia is supposed to be called?
62.	Does Nicaragua have strategic importance?	Is it "Ukraine" or "The Ukraine"?
63.	What type of relationship with Israel best serves America's interests?	If those guys are so Jewish, how come they aren't on the staff of *Tikkun*?
64.	Is it time for America to relinquish its global leadership role?	Should Chelsea go to Japan with Bill and Hillary?
65.	Would economic sanctions on South Africa be effective?	How about economic sanctions on white males right here in the USA?
66.	Should we sell wheat to Russia?	Let's just give them a bunch of money.
67.	Is deployment of the neutron bomb immoral?	Does appointing Jean Kennedy Smith ambassador to Ireland put the Kennedys in their place or what?

68. **LANGUAGE WHICH THE PRESIDENT WOULD NOT SHUT UP IN**

Carter	*Clinton*
Spanish	English

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69. Navy football team can whip Oxford's.

WORLD VIEW

What Ideas Loomed Large Inside Their Respective Thick Skulls?

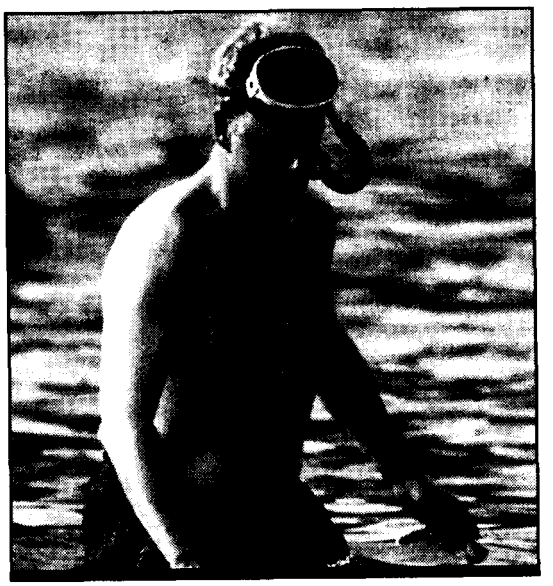
Carter	*Clinton*
70. Human rights	Partnership role for the First Lady
71. Moral equivalent of war	Partnership role for the First Lady
72. National malaise	More mayonnaise
73. Diminished expectations	David Gergen

74. Carter did not, as part of focusing his agenda, address himself as "Stupid." He let us do that for him.
75. Carter wore real blue jeans and not the Levi's 550 roomy-in-the-buns kind.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST PART II

Carter Administration	*Clinton Administration*
76. Mork and Mindy	Mary Matalin and James Carville
77. Laverne and Shirley	Cokie Roberts and Anna Quindlen
78. The Dukes of Hazzard	Various half brothers
79. Three's Company	Gennifer Flowers
80. Happy Days	1980-1992
81. The Incredible Hulk and Wonder Woman	Marriage seems stable for the moment, but super powers are fading
82. WKRP	NPR
83. Star Wars	Base closings
84. Annie Hall	Anita Hill
85. Grease	Mousse
86. Saturday Night Fever	Saturday night working late at the OEOB
87. The Goodbye Girl	Kimba Wood
88. Midnight Express	Bus trips
89. La Cage Aux Folles	The Marines
90. All the President's Men	Home Alone II
91. Abbie Hoffman	Socks the cat

92. Carter's poll ratings were higher (in Iraq).
93. Carter walked the *whole* inaugural parade route.
94. Carter saved America from a plague of Misha the Bear Olympic mascot toys.
95. Has Bill Clinton helped the Shah of Iran get medical treatment?
96. Carter spent his time doing things like figuring out the White House tennis court playing schedule—the man *knew* his intellectual limitations.
97. Carter had enough clout to get Lani Guinier appointed to the Justice Department (and anyone who gets shot down for holding Menckenish views about the excesses of democracy has to be some kind of friend of ours even if she doesn't know it).
98. Carter let the Soviets have Angola, Ethiopia, and South Yemen. And, in retrospect, the Soviets deserved no better.
99. Carter wasn't a throwback to the Carter Era.
100. And let us not forget that Jimmy Carter gave us one thing Bill Clinton can never possibly give us—Ronald Reagan. ❐



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Brit Hume

My Fall Into Disabuse

Hate mail (and fan mail) from viewers of the Rose Garden showdown.

BRIT HUME: *Mr. President, the withdrawal of the Guinier nomination, sir, and your apparent focus on Judge Breyer, and your turn, late it seems, to Judge Ginsburg, may have created an impression, perhaps unfair, of a certain zig-zag quality in the decision-making process here. I wonder, sir, if you could kind of walk us through it, perhaps disabuse us of any notion we might have along those lines. Thank you.*

BILL CLINTON: *I have long since given up the thought that I could disabuse some of you of turning any substantive decision into anything but political process. How you could ask a question like that after the statement she just made is beyond me. [Applause.] Goodbye. Thank you.*

—unabridged text of presidential news conference after Bill Clinton's introduction of Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg as his nominee for the vacant seat on the Supreme Court, Rose Garden, June 14, 1993

When President Clinton blew up at my now-famous question about the "zig-zag quality" of his decision-making, I wasn't sure what had set him off, but I knew one thing: the fifteen minutes of fame that Andy Warhol had promised me were about to begin.

By the next afternoon, there were forty-three messages on my answering machine at the office, and the correspondents' reception desk at ABC News had fielded at least a dozen more. Most were from talk-show producers wanting to set up interviews, but there were a lot of messages from viewers who had watched the event live. The reactions fit a predictable pattern: Clinton-lovers thought I had behaved outrageously, and Clinton haters thought he had. The calls fell off sharply after the first day or so. And after the president patched things up by calling on me for a "follow-up" the next day and jesting about my recent marriage ("You got a honeymoon, and I didn't"), my fifteen minutes were up, except for one thing: the mail continued to pour in for a week or more.

Unlike anchors and talk-show pundits, news correspondents don't normally get much viewer mail, so we pay a lot of attention when we do. Like the callers, the letter-writers fell mostly into two categories: ardently pro- and ardently anti-Clinton. In the pro-Clinton camp, there was a prominent subgroup: those who were especially impressed with Judge Ruth Ginsburg and moved, as Clinton was, by her remarks. Typical was Marian Sherman of Maple Valley, Washington, who said of the judge's statement:

> I found myself crying and was glad that I was alone at the time. To have that moment shattered by your crude and insensitive question was shocking. . . . You are an arrogant bastard, and thanks to the zapper I won't have to listen to you anymore.

Equally to the point was Dorothy Freeman of Livermore, California, who wrote:

> Couldn't you have let the judge bask in her glory for one minute in time? Couldn't you have acknowledged her accomplishments before dumping s--t on them?

Brit Hume is the ABC News White House correspondent.

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My favorite in this category came from one Sidney Pepper of Ada, Oklahoma, who identified himself as a "Ph.D. Madill [sic] School of Journalism, '50." He said he'd never before written such a letter but had been motivated by "your rudeness to President Clinton, Judge Fineburg [sic] and the television audience." If Dr. Pepper really did attend Northwestern's Medill School of Journalism, he must have heard the old editor's dictum about keeping copy "tight, light, bright and (most of all) right"—in other words, more like the card from an anonymous soul identified only as a "non-fan," who said simply, "You, Sir, should be horsewhipped."

Another non-fan, Robert Ellrich of Seattle, said my question "displayed a remarkable composite of snideness, disingenuousness, false politeness, and self-promotion." Even a "sixteen-year-old from the Ozarks," he said, would have spotted the bad faith in the question. "In fact, you are lucky that the person was not a sixteen-year-old from the Ozarks, because if he were, your honeymoon might have ended with a broken nose."

There were other references to my recent marriage, with some writers seeing in it a parallel with Mr. Clinton's selection of Judge Ginsburg. John E. Puelle of New York City asked:

> When all is said and done, I'm curious whether the choice of your wife was done in a zig-zag manner, or whether there were any disappointed girlfriends who felt jilted when it was all over.

Another writer began with congratulations, then said:

> Hopefully during the toasts to the bride, someone wasn't gross enough to ask you why you picked her. And not other women you knew. Perhaps she served your purposes the most?

Other writers didn't bother to quibble with my question or its wording but made clear that their complaint was with me personally. "You are an ass and a clod," said one anonymous note, adding: "Pig Media personified." Another nameless writer asked, "How could you? Your fine suit, your smirking smile, your insincere face. The very most important thing that President Clinton has done—he could have spit in your face." "Don't you just hate it when Bill Clinton makes you look like an even bigger jerk?" wrote another, who signed off, "Have a nice day."

Several writers made clear they don't regularly watch ABC News, but did so on the night of June 14 to see how the episode was handled. In my report on "World News Tonight," I referred to myself only as "a reporter." Since what immediately followed was the sound of my voice asking the famous question, my identity seemed obvious enough. But some viewers took this as a sign of reluctance to own up. Mary Anderson of Kalamazoo, Michigan, wrote:

> I saw Mr. Clinton kick your little butt on C-Span and I'm writing to add fuel to his fire. Then I saw you lying on ABC trying to act like you weren't the person who got mopped up. I despise you, but I watched ABC for the first time in months to see you crawl. It was wonderful. I loved it. Go Bill. He cut your hair.

Another writer, anonymous, who'd seen the event on CNN, had strikingly similar feelings: "So I watched you on ABC News for the first time in months. You are worthless and evil and it's about time someone told you so."

The president, to be sure, had his share of detractors among my correspondents. Wrote David Slick of Indianola, Iowa, "Don't worry, there are a number of things that are beyond this president! Keep up the good work." Jere Irby of Midlothian, Virginia, was similarly encouraging: "You'll still be around doing a magnificent job when Mr. Clinton is back in Arkansas working for his wife's law firm." Roy Glassberg of Oakland, California, sent me a copy of his letter to Mr. Clinton:

> I think your response to Brit Hume's question was disgusting. The world is not about you. . . . In the words of your predecessor: "If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen."

Most of the letters, though, were critical of me, which is normal. People usually write to reporters to complain. I expected the margin to be about eight or nine to one critical, but it ended up about three to two, which I found surprising.

The most surprising thing, though, was not the ratio. It was the content of a single letter from someone I had heard from before. In January 1991, following an appearance with several other White House correspondents on "Donahue," I received a card from Mrs. K. Campbell of San Francisco. I liked it so much I tacked it on the wall of the ABC booth at the White House. Mrs. Campbell called me

> a man, like Bush, who wears arrogance, as Bush does, as naturally and unselfconsciously as you wear a suit. I know you are a personal friend of George Bush's and therefore I take your reporting with a grain of salt. . . . I admire your poise, but I'm wary of your views. I'm writing because I just saw the Donahue Show. You patronized Helen Thomas and were rude to her. Your EGO was huge. You even patronized Donahue. And you did it as though you had a natural right to patronize people.

Last April, following an embarrassing incident in the Rose Garden, in which NBC's Andrea Mitchell and I got into a shouted competition for the president's attention, Mrs. Campbell made my wall again: "You were terribly RUDE to Andrea Mitchell," she wrote. "You forged an image of yourself as a rude, ill-bred bully."

Naturally, I expected to hear from Mrs. Campbell again after the Ginsburg episode and had little doubt what she would say. She was, after all, a person deeply concerned with manners who plainly did not like me. Here, though, is what she wrote:

> President Clinton was RUDE to you and he should apologize. . . . I supported President Clinton last fall. Never again. He is a bumbler, incompetent, testy, vain and has surrounded himself with a too-young inexperienced staff.

There were, I confess, moments in the days just after the incident when I wondered if perhaps my question had been inappropriate. Mrs. Campbell's letter put an end to all that. ❐

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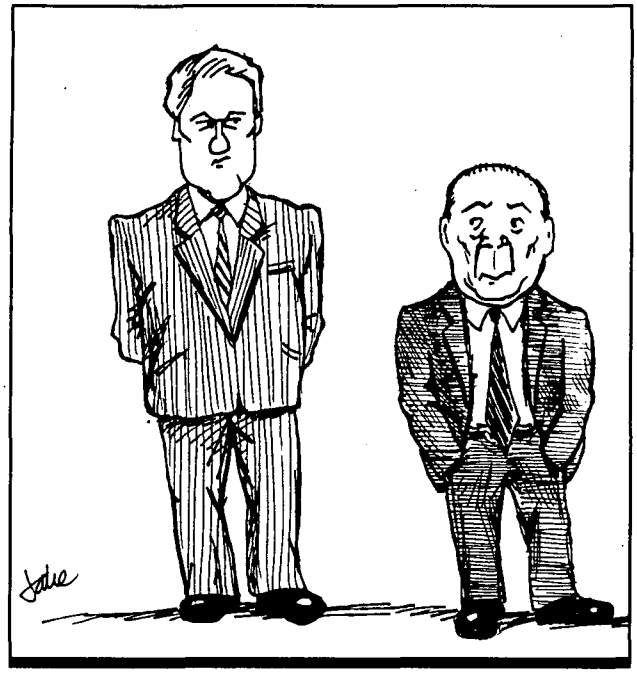
William McGurn

Clinton East

A New Age Ugly American.



Hong Kong

Give David Gergen his due. Hired to appease the unforgiving gods of the media, the new chief of communications has offered up a treasure trove of positive imagery from Bill Clinton's first trip to the Far East. There was a relaxed Clinton fielding questions from young Japanese students; a presidential Clinton announcing a dramatic breakthrough on tariff reductions with his fellow Group of Seven members; a friend of democracy jogging with newly elected Korean president Kim Young Sam; a commander-in-chief playing the sax for the fighting men of the Second Infantry at Camp Casey; a grim leader of the New World Order staring down North Korea on the demilitarized zone with uncompromising talk on Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program.

"In person?" said a U.S. business consultant in Japan. "In person he charmed their pants off." Not an uninteresting choice of metaphor.

But charm has its limits, especially in foreign affairs. However engaging the Asians found Bill Clinton, the verdict on Clintonism is less favorable. Take the overexposed speech at Wasada University. Like so many other Clinton moves, this one was a studied imitation of the Kennedys—in this case of a visit to Wasada by Bobby in 1962, when the then–attorney general diffused a tense situation by inviting agitators onstage for discussion. This time Clinton was there to tell them that increased American access to Japanese markets would be good not only for U.S. business, but also for ordinary Japanese like themselves. In a polite country the students responded politely, and it may have looked good on American TV. But that doesn't mean they were convinced. "I got the impression that Clinton likes to grandstand," 20-year-old Tsumaki Oku told the *Los Angeles Times*. Others simply said that Clinton's ploy fell flat.

It did not help that Clinton happened to be right. The Japanese are tired of being hectored about their economy, especially in the midst of their own recession. Hence the cynicism of Japanese coverage, which gave short shrift to Clinton's appeal to a new Japan (old hat for them) and instead zeroed in on the president's remarks about regional security. Similarly, TV commentators noted with glee how the president's walk down a narrow Tokyo street had been staged by Hollywood's Mort Engelberg, producer of the *Smokey and the Bandit* movies.

The Japanese had already been angered by a private Clinton comment to Boris Yeltsin at their Vancouver meeting in April, warning the Russian leader to be careful in dealing with the Japanese, "because when they say 'yes' they frequently mean 'no.' " Needless to say, the Vancouver story was widely repeated during the G-7 get-together. For the Japanese, it was evidence that Clinton had called them liars. In these circumstances, even the president's schmoozing with Japanese opposition members during a reception at the U.S. Embassy was bound to backfire. While the Japanese want change, they do not want Uncle Sam telling them how go about it.

William McGurn is a senior editor of the Far Eastern Economic Review.

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And as polls show, they certainly don't want Bill Clinton telling them what to do. It's no secret that Asia was rooting for George Bush in the last election, notwithstanding all his problems in keeping his lunch down. Six months of Clintonism appears to have confirmed their worst fears: On the eve of the Clinton visit, some 85 percent of Japanese said that Uncle Sam is unfairly blaming them for America's economic woes; almost three-quarters of the Japanese do not trust Clinton personally; and only 35 percent of the Japanese public describes relations with America as "friendly," according to a survey taken by the Tokyo Broadcasting System along with the *New York Times* and CBS News. Another survey, taken by Japan's NHK television along with ABC, reported that negative sentiments among Japanese had shot up since the November election and were the highest they've been since the 1960s. This, mind you, in a country whose alliance with the U.S. Clinton calls "our most important relationship."

Elsewhere, too, there was a great dissonance between Clinton and Clintonism. Koreans were more than gratified to see the president pay a visit to Panmunjom in the demilitarized zone that runs across the border with the North. They were especially heartened by his uncompromising words to the North Koreans, telling them that the attempt to develop a nuclear weapon was "futile" because "it would mean the end of their country" if they ever used it. That was what Pyongyang needs to hear at this sensitive moment in negotiations, and Clinton delivered it well.

The problem again is that Clintonism in practice does not live up to Clinton's promises in person. Leave aside statements by the State Department's Peter Tarnoff that the administration's domestic problems meant it had to reorder its priorities, which all Asia interpreted as a sign of disengagement. More worrying has been the apparent lack of a coherent strategy—and half-baked concepts such as the recent "win-hold-win" philosophy to emerge from the Pentagon, which boiled down means that the U.S. would not try to fight two wars at once.

"We are apprehensive that the discussion on possible sequential responses as per the 'win-hold-win' strategy might send the wrong signal to Kim Il-Sung," wrote Kim Byong-kak in the *Korea Times*. You can bet that Great Leader Kim will also be taking President Clinton's measure by how he handles his brewing showdown with Saddam Hussein.

Japan is also nervous. Although pacifism is written into its constitution and Foreign Ministry officials insist they are not looking for nuclear weapons, while Clinton was in Tokyo Japan demurred on what ought to have been a routine proposal to extend the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty indefinitely. "We as a non-nuclear power have to depend on the U.S. nuclear capability as an allied country," explained a Foreign Ministry official. Should the U.S. remain strong and the region stable, there would be no problem, he said. But they want to leave their options open. Confirming everyone's worst fears, both the *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* and the *Mainichi Shimbun* newspapers quickly interpreted this demurral as a sign that Japan is thinking about developing the bomb.

China remains wary, and Clinton rightly should keep the pressure on a Peking whose weapons sales are destabilizing U.S. interests in the Middle East and whose own military buildup (including designs on an aircraft carrier) is causing alarm throughout the region. But the White House might think of a better way to do it than to hold Hong Kong and the most progressive elements in China itself hostage to the annual grandstanding on Most Favored Nation status.

TV commentators noted with glee how the president's walk down a narrow Tokyo street was staged by Hollywood's Mort Engelberg, producer of the Smokey and the Bandit *movies.*

The days when an American president could snap his fingers and expect his Asian allies to fall into line are long gone (if ever they existed). The first direct shot across Clinton's bow came in the so-called Bangkok Declaration last spring, when Asian nations thumbed their noses at Western conceptions of human rights and argued that local standards must be taken into account. In short, a more confident—not to mention prosperous—Asia is beginning to assert itself.

Already, Prime Minister Mohammed Mahathir of Malaysia has snubbed Clinton's invitation for a jamboree in Seattle, and others may follow. Now Asia has always had a left wing with a pronounced antipathy to America. But Clinton, *à la* Jimmy Carter, is making America unpopular among her *friends*. In Taiwan, American badgering over intellectual property rights provoked an outburst in parliament—by an influential member of the Kuomintang, not the opposition. "The Americans have bullied us enough," declared Hsieh Chi-tah, one of the country's most respected lawmakers. Nor did the Japanese electorate heed Clinton's call to "make common cause" in the elections that followed his visit, denying the LDP its majority but taking away the most seats from the Socialists. In what may be a portent of things to come, even Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa ended up making some anti-American squeaks in an effort to shore up his campaign (he won his seat, by the way). Indeed, although the LDP has historically stressed partnership with the U.S., today a number of party chieftains argue that the LDP is Japan's only bulwark against American bullying. If the U.S.–Japan alliance goes soft, today's trade differences are going to look like the good old days. Like Jimmy, Bill apparently confuses constant carping with standing tall. ❐

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Stuart Reid

Clinton West

A special relationship gone sour.

London

The Tomahawk raid on Baghdad came as a profound relief to John Major. For the first time in months he was able to do what British prime ministers like to do best: give unqualified support to the American president. "Under U.N. Article 51," Major said, "I think it was entirely right of the United States to act in self-defense and they have my total support in doing so." Britain and America were one again; it was as though there had never been any of that tight-lipped unpleasantness over trade and Bosnia and the Tories' ill-judged support for Bush during the election campaign.

In other parts of Europe, however, where the tradition of following the American leader is less firmly established, the reaction was more measured. True, Boris Yeltsin (who needs the money) and Helmut Kohl (who is after a seat on the Security Council) joined Major in rushing to the colors. But the best the French government could do was to express its "understanding." Understanding, of course, is something you extend, under duress, to juvenile delinquents.

The French response was probably more representative than Major's of European (including British) feeling. Even those of us who have spent a lifetime supporting American military action were uneasy. There was something not quite right about a draft-dodger becoming a kick-ass, something less than honorable about a man who balked at resisting Communist tyranny in Southeast Asia shrugging his shoulders (albeit sadly) over collateral damage in the Middle East.

In short, Slick Willie does not inspire much confidence on this side of the Atlantic, far less respect or affection. There may be one or two policy wonks in the Labour Party who still see Clinton as the man who can show them the way to victory, but they are keeping their heads down. Elsewhere Clinton is regarded with embarrassed disbelief, and sometimes with furious resentment. Thatcherite conservatives see him as a tax-and-spend liberal (although they tend to believe that the American economy will nonetheless recover and carry Britain on its coattails). Traditional conservatives, who don't care how much the American president taxes and spends, see him as a brash opportunist, a blow-dried blowhard with an unhealthy love of jogging. To the hard left, Clinton is just another American president (i.e., a fascist monster). To the broad (or liberal) left he is a deep, almost terminal, disappointment. His bungled attempt to place faggots in foxholes—Christopher Hitchens's phrase—is the source of much anger, not least among homosexual liberals, who believe that Clinton has

Stuart Reid is assistant features editor at the London Sunday Telegraph.

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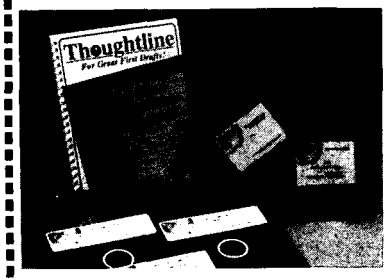

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held them up to ridicule, obloquy, and contempt. After nine months of the Clinton presidency, relations between the U.S. and Britain—indeed, between the U.S. and Europe—are worse than at any time since the Suez crisis of 1956.

To be fair, Clinton is not entirely to blame for the rupture in the Atlantic alliance. America and Europe have been drifting apart since the collapse of Communism. Now that the Russian bear no longer sits in the woods east of the Elbe, who needs Uncle Sam? The tribal war in former Yugoslavia, which is creating deep divisions in NATO, is not of Clinton's making, though his vacillation in the face of it has, at one time or another, outraged hawks and doves, Bosnians and Serbs, Englishmen and Germans, wise men and fools. Clinton inherited the mess in Mogadishu too, but he is only making it worse, at least in European eyes, by using Cobras and AC-130s against General Aidid, and missing.

Still, if Clinton cannot be blamed for the world order he inherited, he must accept much of the blame for Clinton's America, and for the European perception of the U.S. as an overindulged dinosaur whose leaders are given to bonding sessions, confessions of past anxieties, and other sorts of modish introspection and self-centeredness. Sending tanks against wackos in Texas merely confirmed a growing belief that America under Clinton is a lunatic asylum in which the staff are crazier than the inmates.

The USS Hillary, *with 2,000 Marines, is diverted from the Baltic to the Irish Sea. The Marines land under television lights.*

What a calamity. Back in January, some of us tried to put a flattering spin on the inauguration, but our hearts were not in it. Maya Angelou's "Sioux . . . Jew" *was* a rhyme against humanity; Clinton and his entourage *did* come over as jumped-up know-nothings; the Great Republic *was* reduced to the level of a Hollywood gala.

It's not just a cultural thing, though. Even before the election, Edward Pearce, the *Guardian* and *New Statesman* columnist, was writing Clinton off as a "cold-eyed chancer, a cynical careerist accommodating to personal advancement all principle and every notion of right and wrong." Pearce's contempt has grown keener since January, and will have done much to inform liberal opinion in Britain. So will the journalism of Alexander Cockburn and Christopher Hitchens (indeed, Hitchens, who has many admirers on the thoughtful right, will have influenced conservative opinion as well). In June, Cockburn announced in the *New Statesman* that "the Clinton administration is over. . . . The Republican administration officially to be inaugurated in 1997 has already begun." Why? Because Bill had hired David Gergen and sold out to the Democratic Leadership Council and Wall Street. "Clinton," said Cockburn, "will never be anything more than a gofer for Money Power." That Cockburn, eh? In fact, some of the more robust conservatives in London would probably go along with his analysis.

In *Tribune*, the weekly newspaper of the Labour left, Ian Williams arrived at much the same conclusion. Writing in March, he concluded that "if it is a choice [for Clinton] between liberalism and a monied interest lobby, then the lobby will force a U-turn every time." However, Williams did have a good word to say for Clinton. He allowed that the president had at least abandoned abortion restrictions and tried to ameliorate the position of gays in the military.

In July, the right returned to the attack with an outburst from Andrew Alexander in the *Daily Mail* following the G-7 meeting in Tokyo. What exercised Alexander was not the essential fraudulence of the summit—*pace* Mickey Kantor, the accord was far from being the greatest ever achieved in history—but the news that Major was trying to re-establish the special relationship between the U.S. and the U.K.:

> The special relationship has been a snare and a delusion. Over the decades since the war it has amounted to little more than an understanding that Britain will slavishly follow the U.S. line. Any step the Americans took was sure to be followed by the announcement that Britain supported it fully—fulsomely in fact. . . .
>
> The relationship has been special only in the sense that it has been undignified. John Major may be keen to restore the special relationship. It would be sad if this was the one endeavor in which he actually succeeded.

Such sentiments would have been almost unthinkable in a conservative newspaper in the Bush years, and in the Thatcher-Reagan years would surely have resulted in the writer and editor being arraigned before the Bar of the House of Commons. Right-wing anti-Americanism has come a long way since the end of the Cold War, but it has gained enormously in strength and power since Clinton arrived in the White House. The conservative press now tends to be far more critical of America than the left-wing press (which itself is far from generous).

Mutual understanding may not break out, at the earliest, until January 20, 1997. Meanwhile, dark thoughts abound. Simon Jenkins, writing in the *Times*, fantasizes (if that's the word) about a human rights–inspired American invasion of Ireland in 1995. This is how he sees it:

A British patrol mistakenly ambushes a school party in Ulster. The ambush takes place, as ill luck would have it, in front of a team of American fact-finders accompanied by a television crew and at a time when Anglo-American relations have broken down as a result of the war in Bosnia. It causes

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outrage in the U.S., especially in New York and Boston. William Safire and Anthony Lewis chide Clinton for "standing by while the innocent die." The USS *Hillary*, with 2,000 Marines, is diverted from the Baltic to the Irish Sea. The Marines land under television lights. The ensuing war is limited, messy, and confused; the Marine commander complains that she has been given no plan other than to establish a bridgehead. The American public turns sour. Peter Jennings asks: "How many more bodybags must come home before Mr. Clinton sees sense?" America withdraws, talking of "a battle won for democracy and freedom."

Simon Jenkins, a former editor of the *Times* who is married to Gayle Hunnicutt, the Texan cinemactress, is not an ill-wisher; merely a concerned observer who fears that the sort of Wilsonian interventionism that Clinton favors (when the opinion polls seem to demand it) is likely to create more problems than it solves.

John F. Kennedy was another Wilsonian interventionist. No doubt he created more problems than he solved. In 1961, however, he thrilled us all. "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, to assure the survival and the success of liberty." That's not the way it turned out, of course, but the words were fine, and fine words are perhaps the best we can reasonably expect from our leaders.

Thirty-two years ago, we in Britain were taken in; we were enchanted. It truly seemed, as we listened on our wirelesses, that the torch had been passed to a new generation of Americans, born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace . . . Thirty-two years ago Kennedy succeeded in uniting left and right in Britain in support for, and in many cases love of, the United States.

Clinton's singular achievement is to have united left and right against America. It is hard to see how a purposeful Atlantic alliance can survive his presidency. Let's stop thinking about tomorrow. ❐

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Richard W. Carlson

Frostie's Revenge

A true story of the Tenderloin.

The first hooker I ever got to know well was called "Frostie." Her real name was Edna. She lived with her daughter Pogo, 5, and another prostitute named Darlene Hibbs. The three of them shared one bedroom in a seedy walk-up in the warehouse district south of Market Street in San Francisco. Darlene (whose real name was Margaret) worked out-call massage and was a lesbian. Frostie was only 20 and as homely and as sad-faced as a mud fence, but she had an effervescent, almost goofy, and very appealing personality.

She had arrived in San Francisco from Dyersburg, Tennessee, on a bus six years before, a pregnant 14-year-old running away from a sleazy family. Nine months pregnant, pulling a battered vinyl bag tied with twine and filled with child's possessions, not in anticipation of the baby but because she was just a little kid herself, she was hit on before she was out of the bus station lobby. The hitter was one James Jones, a pimp, or at least an aspiring pimp—which is why a mooshy-faced woman-child with no breasts and a pendulous belly looked to him like a potential money-maker. And he was right. He took her in, bought her some clothes, and was reasonably nice to her. For instance, he took her to San Francisco General Hospital and actually waited while she finished her labor (it had begun some hours before). And he seldom struck her. In Frostie's previous life, not getting hit was a privilege reserved only for that time spent away from home, like in school or in a store. Otherwise, you could count on being slapped, kicked, or punched—regularly and on principle.

Jones, who had begun calling himself "Fillmore Slim" as a pimp handle, and had suggested "Frostie" instead of the out-of-date "Edna," was actually rather even-tempered. Not that he was sentimental. Jones turned Frostie out within a few days of first bringing her back to his Tenderloin apartment. He would solicit the customers himself, charging them twenty dollars each, and run through as many as he could. A couple of them were turned off by the physical fact of Frostie's pregnancy and demanded their money back. One was clearly capable of taking it back, so Jones gave it to him. He told the other one to leave or he'd kill him.

In the years since her arrival on Trailways, Frostie had gone through two other pimps and now worked only for herself. Jones, now "Fillmore Slim," had gone on to

Richard W. Carlson, president and chief executive officer of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, is at work on a memoir, New Tales of the Barbary Coast. *"Frostie's Revenge" is a true story. Some of the names have been changed.*

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build up a stable of women, and now had as many as six or seven girls working for him, at least half of them white, and all of them much better-looking than Frostie. He would pick them all up off the streets around 4 a.m. for breakfast at the Pam Pam Room, hauling them there in his bright green Caddy and then putting them at a big table in the back, where he would order pancakes with considerable noise and fanfare. Any tourist who wandered into the Pam Pam at that hour might have thought they were an interracial theatrical troupe, one man and all these women in mini-skirts or hot pants and halter tops, and all with big, spiraled, beehive hairdos, snapping gum and using the f-word in loud, don't-give-a-damn voices.

Frostie was good to her child, probably the daughter, she said, of a boy in her seventh-grade math class back in Dyersburg. But, then again, possibly the child of her first cousin, her mother's sister's son. Who could know for sure? Pogo's real name was Tiffany. She was called Pogo not after the Walt Kelly cartoon but because she was so thin she looked like a mop standing up on its pole. Frostie was able to make enough money to send Pogo to an expensive private school in Pacific Heights—although what didn't get spent on the little girl seemed to go up Frostie's nose, or down her throat, or into her veins. She wasn't a fully addicted junkie yet, but she was close.

Frostie was only 20 and as homely and as sad-faced as a mud fence, but she had an effervescent, almost goofy, and very appealing personality.

My partner Lance Brisson and I had come to know Frostie when we shot an hour-long documentary on hookers and their friends for ABC. It was called "The Streetwalkers" and was pretty gritty for the day. I had gotten to know so many prostitutes that once, as I walked with my girlfriend and her very social parents into Trader Vic's in Cosmo Alley in San Francisco, a group of black hookers, at least six of them, walked past in high heels and vinyl mini-skirts and started razzing me. "Hey, Dicky, how ya doin', baby?" "It's Dick, girls!" and so on. My date's parents were struck mute, even after I tried to explain how we had come to be acquainted.

San Francisco, or at least its wee-hours nightlife, was small, and Lance and I had been collecting film stories from its dark pool regularly for a couple of years. We saw Frostie every few nights, even if only to say hello. One cold night in October 1967, we spotted her flapping away the night air with her arms as she waved at cars. She was wearing a rabbit car-coat, black plastic boots, a mini-skirt, and some kind of dark stockings with red hearts on them. Nothing fit well. She always looked kind of a mess. Frostie had a lumpy body and a bad complexion. Too many teeth gathered in the front of her mouth, making her unable to close her lips fully and muffling her speech. But she was genuinely friendly and had the kind of wry wit that comes from lots of experience with pain.

She was at Ellis and Market, her favorite venue, where she was soliciting motorists and trying to avoid the vice cops at the same time. We were on our way over to Tad's Steakhouse a few blocks away where we could get a char-broiled steak, baked potato, and coffee for $1.49. Lance pulled over and Frostie leaned down and gave me her goofy, busy-toothed smile. We asked her to come along, we'd buy. She hopped in the back. Frostie was a chatterbox and a very good gossip. In this case, she was about to drop a story right in our laps.

It was after midnight but there were quite a few people in Tad's. This was not exactly a low-life place, but it was borderline. The cashier was a heavy young woman whose name I don't recall, though Lance and I saw her often and she was always cheery with us. She was plain as a post and a little slow. As we waited with our trays to pay her, the man in front of us, in front of Lance actually, began to give her a hard time. He was a tall, thin guy in jeans and a two-tone jacket. His first couple of lines to her were flirtatious and kind of risqué. I think they went right over her head, as she looked at him in confusion. His voice then took on a nastier sound and he began to insult her. He was holding his money but it was out of her reach and he was continuing a slightly drunken harangue. Lance said to the man, "Give her the money and get rolling, buddy."

The man turned towards us with his tray in both hands and said, "I'll get rollin' when I'm f---ing well ready, a---hole." Lance had already laid his tray on the chrome bars. He smiled at the man and slammed the fellow's tray from the bottom right up into his face. The steak, the succotash, the potato and its sour cream, and a glass of milk all hit the man full and simultaneously. He lost his balance and his cowboy boots slipped on the milk on the floor. He went down on his butt. His plate (probably) had clipped his lip and he was bleeding. He had gold chains nestled in his chest hair and they now were coated with potato and goo. Frostie laughed and so did the cashier and so did the cook, who stood watching through clouds of charcoal smoke and steak fumes.

The guy knew he was going to lose. Amid a lot of swearing he walked out, sour cream and chives forming a white and green line across his pompadour.

Frostie had had few if any defenders in a life filled with humiliations and aggressions of a wide variety, and it was Lance's assault in defense of a slightly slow fat girl, I now realize, that led her to confide in us. "You guys are so cool, so bitchin'," she said, laughing and

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snorting as we chatted through swirls of smoke from our unfiltered cigarettes, drinking coffee after our meal. "Oh, I loved that," she said about the guy sitting on the floor, steak juice running off his face, and proceeded to tell us about the robbery planned for the office of the Executive Motel on Grove Street this Friday night at 11 p.m. She knew exactly where and when the robbery was going to take place because she was going to be one of the robbers herself.

First, I should explain a couple of things about Lance. If he was saddled with the usual variety of physical fears, he never let them interfere with any split-second action he decided to take, such as that night at the steak-house. This view held considerable potential for trouble, of course, but it was also a reliable source of amusement for me and others who might be around as witnesses.

Another example comes to mind. In Los Angeles one early morning, Lance and I and a copy-editor from the *Los Angeles Times* named Noah Liebling were waiting at a red-light in front of the Beverly Wilshire Hotel. It was 3 a.m. The street was empty. Lance was driving his new Chevy Monza, a smallish car whose style and looks never caught on with buyers. I was in the passenger seat. Noah, who was quite drunk, was in the back.

If the habitués of Denny's Roundhouse #2 (there was no #1, nor #3 either) all lived together, it would be on Tough Street in Meantown in the last house at the worst end of the block.

We had just come from a wet night at the bar of the Luau, a nearby bistro run by Steve Crane, Lana Turner's ex-husband and father of Cheryl, with whom we had been chatting. Cheryl Crane was our age but had already lived one life and was struggling to make another. She had taken the blame for killing gangster Johnny Stompanato, her mother's lover, though the local gossip always held that she was protecting Lana. Cheryl had not been long out of official custody and was trying to find happiness with her father and away from her crazy mother.

Anyway, after leaving Cheryl, we were sitting at the light when a car pulled up on our right. Big black Cadillac, probably a '52, driven by a James Dean imitator with a cascade of curls falling down over his forehead, his T-shirt sleeve rolled up over the deck of butts on his biceps. He had a tough-looking Valley girl practically on his lap. Noah was thoroughly looped and when James Dean started practicing his hard-look our way, Noah gave him the finger.

Deano returned the gesture with a roar of outrage as the two cars slowly accelerated down Wilshire. We were side by side, really close, when the guy flips his lighted cigarette at my open window. It misses. His middle finger is working like a piston, he is yelling insults, some of them directed at Lance's new car, which he calls an effing "wuss-hog," or some such, which it pretty much was. We are now up to about 25 m.p.h. At the insult to his car Lance pulls away and swings a wide arc to the left across the center line. He throws it into second, picks up speed, and makes a loop back directly headed at James Dean and his car door.

I could see the guy in our headlights. He had a look of utter amazement on his pimpled face as Lance—wearing a toothy grin and with his hands in a death-lock on the wheel—bore his wuss-wagon right down on him. Deano stood on the gas and tried to outdistance the assault. Lance missed the driver's door but plowed right into the rear side of the Caddy, knocking it against the curb and blowing a tire. The force knocked the bumper off on one side and crumpled the back door so resoundingly that the window above it shattered and collapsed. I watched as the old car, its rear bumper gouging a furrow in the street, amidst a spray of sparks and a terrible racket, drove along the curb trying to escape. Noah was hooting and shouting encouragement from the back and Lance accelerated alongside and swung into the Caddy three or four times before Deano ground to a halt and he and his girl friend piled out on the sidewalk, escaping through the passenger's door. The Caddy looked better than the real James Dean's Porsche did after it hit Donald Turnipseed's car a few years earlier and a hundred miles north—but not all that much better. And Lance's Monza had lost its pristine look, no question. The entire passenger side was as wrinkled as a crone's neck. The hood was sprung, the grille had fallen out, and both headlights were hanging down like eyeballs from an optic nerve.

If Lance had serious regrets about the practical consequences of this kind of decision-making—like having no money to fix the damage, and having to hide the car from his parents—he kept them to himself and bore up under it like a man.

Lance and I became friends the week after Christmas, 1962. We were both copyboys at the *Los Angeles Times*. I was 21 and had arrived in L.A. by bus a few days before. I was paying $12 a week for a room at the El Dorado Hotel on Spring Street. Lance lived in Beverly Hills. It was a great place then, undiscovered by the international tackballs who would go on to ruin it. There were bean fields around what is now the Century Plaza Hotel. Century City itself was still the back lot of 20th Century Fox Studios, and there were plenty of people living who remembered when Sunset Boulevard became a dirt road as it went from Hollywood into Beverly Hills. Cesar Romero later told me he used to ride a horse down Sunset thirty years before. In 1962, the sidewalks still rolled up after dark. Clinton Anderson was the Beverly Hills Chief of Police. If you didn't live there

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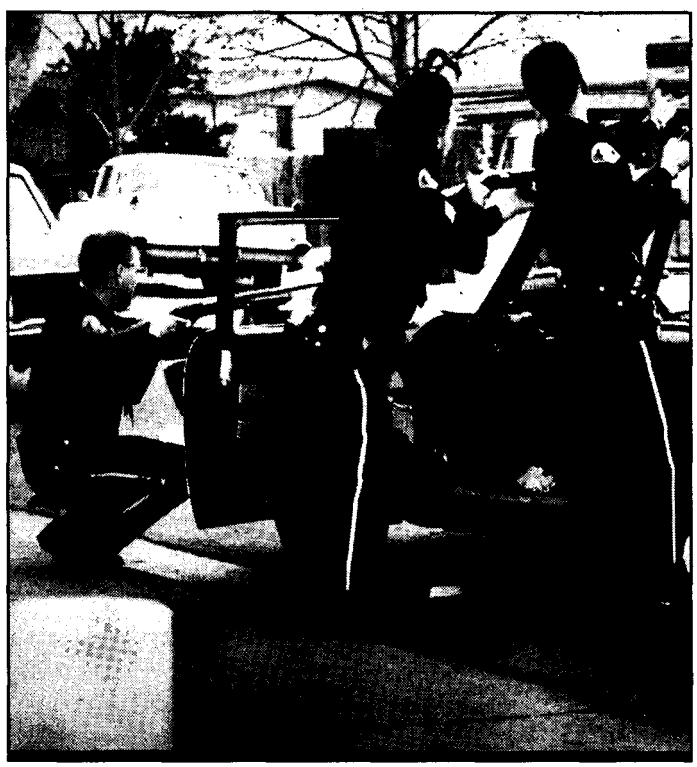
and you were on the streets at night you could count on being stopped and politely questioned by Anderson's boys. That's the way residents wanted it, that's the way they got it.

Lance's mother was Rosalind Russell, the actress. His father was Freddie Brisson, a Broadway and film producer. They lived for forty years at 706 North Beverly Drive. Lance was an only child, a fact that he sometimes used to explain his occasional eccentricities. Lance dropped out of USC in his third year and talked himself into a job as a city-side reporter, at age 21 the youngest in the *Times*'s recent memory. He'd already been working in the newsroom part-time for a couple of years as a copy boy, filling paste pots and running copy to the Linotype operators. That was where I got my first impression of him.

Lance was almost six-foot-two and thin. He had very wide shoulders, not thick, but almost as if they had been steamrolled. From behind it looked like the coat hanger had been left in his sport jacket. He was smart, well-read, had a good sense of humor, and was a little tightly wound.



In the two years Lance and I had been pursuing film stories full-time for TV, we had met a lot of folks who were even more tightly wound, and who had no sense of humor at all. We had been attacked with feet, fists, teeth, clubs, boards, kitchen appliances (a woman once threw an iron juice squeezer at me), chair legs, rocks, and bottles. We'd been shot at a half-dozen times.

All of which is to say that if we had anything to do with it, Frostie and her robbery would be just another welcome link in this chain of melodrama and one about which the risks weren't even worth worrying.

Frostie's two robbers were Alvin Roberts, 24, known to friend and foe as "Piggy," and Jerome Cook, 23, who had no nickname. The pair, criminal careerists, lived in the Fillmore District in a project called the Pink Palace. They had rap sheets as long as a Dead Sea scroll. They supplemented their drug-dealing income with occasional street robberies, purse snatchings, and muggings of one kind or another. The Friday night foray at the Executive Motel was to be their first institutional robbery, Frostie said, though they had cased a few mom-and-pop stores over the past weeks.

Frostie had brought the role of look-out and get-away driver upon herself, actually suggesting it to the pair. She knew Piggy and Jerry from the street. She also knew that one or both of them had robbed her apartment and stolen her stereo and some costume jewelry. Unfortunately for them, they didn't know that she knew. She had spotted a pair of her own bangle earrings swinging from the lobes of another hooker one night in front of the Downtown Bowl, and it had pissed her off mightily. But, she didn't say a word. Through yet another girl she found out that Piggy Roberts, ever the aspiring pimp, had given the earrings to the hooker as a gift. Piggy's good friend Jerry Cook, a running mate of one of her former pimps, had been in Frostie's pad a few times. It didn't take a brain surgeon to figure that Jerry had fingered her stereo and jewelry and that Piggy, and maybe Jerry too, had walked off with them.

Soon, Frostie started hanging around with Jerry and Piggy and their motley crew of street losers. She even stashed a gun in her place for them for a week, all the while plotting her revenge. She volunteered for the robbery as soon as she found out they were trying to decide what kind of a place to hit. Her plan was to keep track of where and when it was to go down and then pass on the info to some of the vice cops she talked with once in a while. Then we came along.

Frostie wanted Jerry and Piggy sent up the river sans paddle. Lance and I thought the justice aspect was nice, but that it ran a distant second to the film opportunity. And we knew two cops with whom we could work this all out. Frank Fanning and Eddie Wilson were partners, plainclothes detectives only a few years older than we were. They were actually patrolmen who were temporarily in plainclothes. They needed a political boost of some kind to stay there, to gain permanent admission to the Detective Bureau, with its prestige and its career tenure. A collar of two robbers *in flagrante* could be quite a boost to their careers. Fanning was dark-haired, good-looking, a guy with an easy smile. His partner, Eddie Wilson, was more serious, smaller, blond. We called them and met for a beer at Lefty O'Doul's saloon downtown. We laid out the story as we knew it, leaving out the where, when, and who—including Frostie's name—until they agreed to do it our way, which basically meant keeping us clued in and letting us set up the filming ahead of time.

Tips on robberies-to-be came in often, and seldom ever

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panned out. The fact that we had a trustworthy informant who would be there was worth something. And the idea that they could catch these crooks right on TV got their adrenaline pumping. We would get a good story. They would get the bad guys and the glory: a truly symbiotic relationship.

We worked out a simple scenario on a scarred back-table at O'Doul's. We would meet after dark on Friday night. Lance and I would have checked with the informant to make sure the heist was still on. We'd hide somewhere. Eddie would pose as the desk clerk. We would film Frank and Eddie as they took the pair on coming out the door after they'd gotten the money.

This was a plan with considerable flexibility. We'd fill in the details later.

Our first problem was convincing Roger Grimsby that he should let us work overtime to stake out the motel. Grimsby was both the news anchor and the news director. He was also our mentor, our chief. He had hired us as free-lancers. We would, of course, have been willing to work this for nothing, but there wasn't a chance we could do that. The union watched Grimsby and us with a gimlet eye. They were very irritated with us. For two years while we free-lanced film to KGO-TV (the ABC owned-and-operated station), the union suspected Grimsby had us on an under-the-table retainer, a violation of union rules. They could never prove it. But they were correct.

Soon, Frostie started hanging around with Jerry and Piggy and their motley crew of street losers. She even stashed a gun in her place for them for a week, all the while plotting her revenge.

The robbery was to be late Friday. We normally worked Sunday night through Friday morning. The news shows on the weekend were losers: fifteen minutes of local news following fifteen minutes of a weak network feed. Whatever film we might get would be too late for the Friday 11 p.m. show. If we did get a good story, it would have to be used Saturday night. Not only would that be a poor investment from Grimsby's point of view, but he would believe that the odds of the robbery actually coming off were slim. He would figure he would get exactly nothing for any money spent on OT. Of course, he would probably be right.

It was after the six o'clock news on Thursday night. Grimsby was sitting in his glassed cubicle in the corner of the newsroom. It was shortly before he and sportscaster Stu Williams would amble over to the bar across the street and tie one on before the 11 p.m. show. Grimsby would not be an easy sell. Grimsby was a hard case. But he did have very good news sense. He was a newsie first and an anchor next. Not common in that business even then, when most of the on-air TV people had drifted over from radio, rip-and-read radio in large part. These were people whose idea of punctuating a sentence was to put three dots between every thought. All dulcet tones and no sense.

Lance and I walked into Roger Grimsby's crowded cubicle. Dust-covered papers were in stacks on his metal desk. Grimsby occupied the only chair.

Stu Williams, always smiling, was sitting with his butt in an open desk drawer. Stu was called "Uncle Stu" behind his back. He looked like Fred Mertz from the Lucy show. He was about 50, short and round, with a pink complexion. Stu was very relaxed. So relaxed he reminded me of a Campbell Kid whose bones had been removed. Well, maybe not totally removed. Uncle Stu was the original Mr. Libido, a heavy player at the carnal piano. Stu not only had two wives who knew and loathed each other—but also numerous girlfriends, many of whom also knew each other and sometimes clashed in and around ABC property. These women were often in the newsroom or the studios looking for, or touring around with, Stu. Stu's love life was like a political rally in the Balkans. The wife with serious tenure had white hair and looked much like Stu. She lived in Mill Valley, miles to the north over the Golden Gate Bridge. Wife number two was closer to forty, but she was no runway model either. She was rounder than Stu, and close to the ground. She lived in San Mateo, twenty miles to the south. This was some triangle. "I think it's all crazy," Grimsby would say. "I don't know how he can stand it. He must like abuse."

If Stu didn't bring a woman back to the studio for a romp on the couch in Gypsy Rose Lee's dressing room, he would carry in his wire-copy script two minutes before airtime, slap some powder on his shiny forehead with a big puff, pose for the opening long shot with Grimsby at their desk. When the camera dollied in on Grimsby reading the news, Stu would lay his pink face flat down on the desk and fall into a deep sleep, right up until the commercial before his sports segment, when the director would wake him over the studio loudspeaker, or until Stu started snoring, whichever occurred first.

Grimsby and Williams were chortling over a joke. Grimsby's eyes were damp from laughing and choking on his cigarette smoke. It was clearly the time for us to strike. We told Roger about the robbery. About Frostie. About how reliable she is. We agree that it's true you never know for certain about two guys as flaky as Jerry and Piggy. They might forget to do the robbery. On the other hand our informant will be there to remind them. Yes, we understand that the union will make Grimsby pay a sixth day. We know that's time and a half. Yes, it's true we won't be able to shoot anything else that night since it'll take time to set up. How about if we come in early on Friday? We'll work all day. We'll cover news conferences,

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something Grimsby agreed when we were hired we would never have to do.

Grimsby is not convinced. The vice president and general manager of the O&O, a man who should be selling neckties from a suitcase on Market Street, the egomaniacal no-brainer who insists on doing every station editorial on camera himself and who always shakes his head the entirely wrong way when he says something like, "Remember, vote *yes* on Proposition 9 and vote *no* on Proposition 11," is very seriously on Grimsby's case. This is a guy who every time I ever talked to him in his office stood head down, legs apart, slowly swinging a putter at an imaginary ball on the carpet during the entire conversation. The VP is monumentally annoyed.

Grimsby has been fired by memo ("This multi-million dollar TV station is not your private plaything, Mister . . .") and then rehired, maybe. "All because of last week's unfortunate mishap," Grimsby says. Roger means last week's quite amazing—and now rather well-known—on-air debacle.

What happened that night was pretty simple. Roger and Stu ran into some women at Enrico Banducci's cafe on Broadway. Davey Rosenberg, who weighed almost 400 pounds—"The World's Greatest Press Agent," his card read—was at Enrico's too. He represented Carol Doda's place and all the other topless clubs. He gave Grimsby and Stu a pass for free drinks good for every one of them and during the three hours between shows they dragged the women to each club for two drinks apiece. There were six clubs. The women were so drunk they fell asleep on chairs in the station lobby. Grimsby and Stu barely made it to the anchor desk in time. Grimsby's story was that he may have been drunk but he wasn't *that* drunk.

The facts are that in the middle of a live-reader five minutes into the show, Grimsby shifted his weight in his swivel chair and the seat snapped in half, causing him to disappear with a crash below the desk. The director, sitting in the control room down the hall was looking at a cue sheet. He glanced up in time to see that Grimsby had totally vanished in mid-sentence from the monitor. Meanwhile, the remainder of the chair went racing on its metal wheels over the wood platform that held the anchor desk and clattered onto the studio floor, knocking over the weather easel. The director had no idea what happened. He was a religious man. This was almost supernatural. He freaked out and pulled the camera back to a wide shot, fully exposing Uncle Stu who was collapsed in his chair, his rubbery face down flat on the desk in a drunken pool of saliva. This remarkable scene concluded with Grimsby struggling to his knees behind the desk, his head and shoulders emerging over the top. He looked at the camera and said slowly and quite clearly, "You wouldn't f---ing believe me if I tried to explain it." Or words to that effect.

The director actually felt faint. The screen went black

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102. "If the big spenders get their way, they'll charge everything on your taxpayer's express card and, believe me, they never leave home without it."

– Ronald Reagan, 1984
Our Greatest Leader

103. "If I could paraphrase Will Rogers' line about never having met a man he didn't like, it seems that some in government have never met a tax they didn't hike."

– Ronald Reagan, 1981
Our Greatest Leader

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and that was the end of the show. I have to mention that if it was the very worst thing that could happen to Roger and Stu, it was clearly the very best thing that had happened to thousands of Bay Area TV news watchers. The station was flooded with calls and letters over the week with only a few calling for dismissal; in fact, many offered kudos for the most bizarre news delivery of the year. Stu maintained that he had been drinking hardly at all and was simply resting, presumably thinking about how best to present that day's Dodgers' game. Roger muttered darkly about his chair being sabotaged.

Redemption was clearly the angle to push, and we pushed it hard. Our points were that any little O.T. costs for Lance and me to work Friday could be buried for weeks. How would the VP know? Plus, if they got rid of Grimsby and Williams it would be sooner rather than later, so what difference would it make anyway? On the other hand, if the motel was really held up, if Frostie really came through, if we caught the entire undertaking from beginning to end on high-speed color film with sound, well, I mean wouldn't that knock the VP's socks off? Roger had to agree that it might. Wouldn't it demonstrate *sober* judgement on Grimsby's part?

"Okay, okay. Do it," he said.

The station was flooded with calls and letters over the week with only a few calling for dismissal; in fact, many offered kudos for the most bizarre news delivery of the year.

About eight o'clock that Thursday night, we found Frostie at Big Al's in the Tenderloin. The heavy rubber curtains hanging in the entrance to the bar—to keep little kids from peeking in—were amateurishly painted with a fat mobster holding a tommy gun under his arm, a cigar the size of a banana clamped in his teeth. It was cool and dark inside. A thin blonde girl was moving her feet on the bar and pretending to dance. She was wearing only a tattoo. It was on her thigh and might have been a scorpion. I didn't want to stare. I could see that she had goose bumps.

Frostie was at the end of the bar with her roommate Darlene. They were sipping Black Russians on the rocks and chattering like magpies. Izzy Mitrovitch was perched on the stool between them. He was over 80 years old. He was about five feet tall and had furry eyebrows like summer caterpillars. He wore a battered fedora back on his head and an overcoat two sizes too big. He was a good friend to Frostie, Darlene, and a dozen other Tenderloin whores. The pimps all knew Izzy, too. They did not like him. He made them nervous. What does that dude want? they would say. If he don't want sex, and he don't want money, then what's his game? You stay away from that old cracker, you hear, they would tell their girls.

But what Izzy wanted was too simple for them to grasp. He only wanted to continue doing what he had been doing since almost the turn of the century: hanging around working girls. Since 1904, Izzy Mitrovitch's life had been hopelessly but fruitfully intertwined with hookers, and their lives were intertwined with his. Izzy was seldom ever a customer (not in decades, and in the early years only sporadically), never a pimp (a "mack" is what Izzy called them), often a friend, and always their clothier, their haberdasher. Izzy Mitrovitch had been the premier couturier to generations of the crème de la crème of America's whores.

For more than fifty years, Izzy crisscrossed the country, calling on every bordello, whorehouse, and collection of cribs of any reputation and permanence. He traveled every year from Portland, Maine, to Portland, Oregon. He never learned to drive. He toted two steamer trunks on buses and trains. Izzy supplied the inmates of these houses of ill repute, as newspapers awkwardly called them, with the second most important tool of their trade (they had been *born* with the first): sexy clothing. He sold exotic lingerie, feather boas in a dozen hues, mesh stockings, net stockings, genuine silk stockings, fancy garters, embroidered panties, monogrammed panties, breakaway panties, crotchless panties (Izzy called them "an engineering marvel"), bras with no cup, bras that fell off when you looked at them, and various complex and sometimes ingenious clothing constructions not available in the Sears catalogue.

These garments were known in the trade as "trick suits." Izzy Mitrovitch was to the trick suit in his time what Jimmy Galanos was to the A-line dress in his. And Izzy took orders for straight clothes, too. Many of them. Until the sartorial and class distinctions between hookers and straight women began to blur, dress shops and some department stores were off-limits to hookers in many towns. They weren't welcome there. Izzy filled this void. He became the clothing life-line and the boon friend of madams, parlor musicians, bouncers, sheet-and-towel girls, whorehouse maids, and cooks, and kitchen workers by the hundreds; and of "working broads" (as Izzy called them) by the thousands.

Izzy had been tiny but dapper in his youth. He was sharp-featured, but with a broad smile. He never married, but for years was in love with one of the girls. She was called "French Mary," though she was from County Cork. Her name was Mary Ryan. She was as small as Izzy. She had a heart-shaped face, lightly freckled, and long auburn hair. She worked at Polly Adler's whorehouse in Manhattan. Izzy rented a room in Hell's Kitchen to be near her. She would visit him there all day on Sunday when he was off the road. They talked about living together. She could quit the business, maybe fill orders for him on

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Seventh Avenue while he traveled. He could teach her the rag trade. She could stop being French Mary. She could be Izzy's Mary.

Once, they even talked about marriage, maybe even children, this on the night of her twenty-fifth birthday when Izzy took her to Jimmy's Club Durante speakeasy for drinks and dancing. But their talk never went anywhere. Izzy was gone for months. Mary couldn't quit Polly's. She was sending money home to Ireland. They drifted apart. After a four month trip in 1932, including three weeks in Cuba where Izzy wrote a dizzying stack of orders, he dropped into Polly Adler's place to see Mary. Polly was cool and businesslike, as usual; her oft-repeated motto, "A house is not a home," was apt. Mary left a month ago, she told Izzy. The visiting doctor—he came every Monday—had diagnosed Mary with TB. She couldn't work here like that, Polly said. Sorry, Izzy. Polly had no idea where Mary had gone.

Izzy searched New York for her to no avail. Other than Polly's girls, no one even knew who she was, much less had seen her. Izzy went back on the road. He kept his room in Hell's Kitchen. He asked about her while he traveled. He would run into girls who'd known her. They were now working at the Chicken Ranch or Tillie's in Cleveland or Lulu Porter's on Olvera Street in L.A. No, they hadn't seen her and they didn't know anybody who had. After a while he became embarrassed, and he stopped asking. Izzy never heard her name again for the rest of his life. At 83, he still sometimes thought about her.

For years, when he lived in New York, Izzy would take a train to San Francisco for Sally Stanford's annual Christmas party. He had become one of Sally's closest friends. Her holiday blow-out filled "Valhalla," her Pine Street mansion, with an incredible assortment of men in tuxedos and ladies in long dresses: Judges, the mayor and his senior staff, every police captain in the city, county supervisors, the editors of the daily papers, a dozen swells from the Social Register, and as many as a hundred of Sally's girls, present and former. Izzy Mitrovitch was one of the few men ever invited to this Christmas Eve open house and asked to spend the night and to stay for Christmas morning breakfast, after which he joined Sally for a Ramos Fizz, and watched the girls open their stockings by the fire in the living room.

When Izzy retired in 1958 at age 74, he moved to San Francisco, mostly to be near Sally, though her business was dying. Sally retired, too, and opened a restaurant. It was on the waterfront in Sausalito. She called it "Valhalla." It wasn't quite the same. For one thing, the girls who worked there wore polyester and waited on tables. They probably bought their underwear at Macy's. There wasn't a pair of break-away panties in the bunch.

Izzy was lonely. So he took up with the San Francisco street girls. Though he dropped the rag business, he could offer Frostie and her friends a small but helpful service. Over the years Izzy did a little fencing, mostly jewelry. Gold, silver or platinum bracelets, brooches and pins were a specialty. Izzy would pay twenty cents on the dollar for the metal and give fair weight; he offered the same price on the stones which he'd pry loose and examine with a loupe before he melted the metal down in his crucible. This was convenient for Frostie and Darlene because their sticky fingers were regularly attaching themselves to gold tie-bars, platinum cuff links with diamond chip initials, pinky rings with rubies (or maybe that's only a garnet), and the like. They were in a business where the confusion of lots of people tossing clothes off and on every couple of hours had a profitable side-benefit if you were quick.

Izzy lived in two rooms over Big Al's. Every couple of weeks Frostie would bring him a paper bag with a small assortment of jewelry she or Darlene had lifted.

Lance and I greeted the trio. Izzy stopped talking immediately. He'd probably just paid the girls for some jewelry. He had no idea we knew about their business relationship. He would have had a stroke if he knew that Frostie blabbed to us regularly about Izzy's life, including his busy little crucible and the jewel thieves he dealt with.

"You know what they do with Black Russians in the Soviet Union?" I said. Frostie had a Kahlua mustache over her lip. "They send them to Patrice Lumumba University." Frostie gave a good natured snuffle at this stupid joke. Darlene grinned blankly. Izzy—who knew we were reporters and hence nobody he was going to talk to—smiled weakly but looked through us.

We took Frostie over to a corner booth. She had seen Piggy and Jerry just hours before. She'd picked up Pogo at Miss Hamlin's School on Broadway and the two had taken a taxi into the Fillmore District, where Frostie found Piggy

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and Jerry drinking beer and shooting pool in Denny's Roundhouse #2 on Fillmore Street. Frostie had gotten the message we had left with Darlene, saying that we needed to talk ASAP. She knew this translated that we'd tipped some cops and were set to go. Frostie knew we would be there Friday night, whether or not Grimsby came through with the overtime.

Pogo sat against the wall in Denny's. She was wearing her Miss Hamlin's outfit: blue jumper, knee socks, penny loafers. She was reading papers from her book bag and looked a wee bit out of place. Frostie was chatting up Jerry and Piggy over their pool game. Denny's Roundhouse #2 catered to a very rough trade. No uniformed cop would dare enter without reinforcements. I once heard a patrolman say about Denny's, "I ain't going in there. I might get captured." Half the customers at any given moment were armed, had just sniffed or shot up, or were planning to do so shortly. Spitting on the floor was nothing. It was not uncommon to see someone spit on a pool table or at the mirror behind the bar. If the habitués of Denny's Roundhouse #2 (there was no #1, nor #3 either) all lived together, it would be on Tough Street in Meantown in the last house at the worst end of the block.

Stu not only had two wives who knew and loathed each other—but also numerous girlfriends, many of whom also knew each other and sometimes clashed in and around ABC property.

Frostie rooted around in the bottom of her straw tote bag. She pulled out Jerry's large .38 revolver. It was chrome-plated with a six-inch barrel and white plastic handgrips with steers' heads on them. She laid it on the green felt of the table. Piggy laughed as Jerry snatched it up and slid it into his belt next to his navel and under his filthy Ohio State University sweat shirt. Still laughing, Piggy gestured to the bulge of the gun as it pointed south from Jerry's waistband. "Yo, man you gonna blow off your Johnson you ain't careful." Jerry looked dim for a brief moment as the concept registered. He shifted the metal bulk to his side.

They got down to business. Frostie was to meet them the next night at 10:30 on Grove Street, two blocks from the motel. None of them owned a car. Piggy would steal one. They would meet Frostie with it. She could case the motel on foot and meet back at the car with her report. Jerry and Piggy would hit the motel. They would use Jerry's gun. Piggy would try to borrow one. Frostie would sit behind the wheel, engine running, watching the rearview mirror. She would be able to see Piggy and Jerry after they exited the motel office with the money and dashed around the corner. It was a short sprint back to the car. Frostie would drive right up Grove Street, not too fast, and then onto Oak Street, with a straight shot up into the Haight-Ashbury. The lights were timed. Be there in five minutes. Jerry and Piggy would be stretched out in the back. No way the police would be looking for a white woman. They'd dump the car and saunter over to Haight Street. Maybe have a couple of drinks at a hippie bar. Piece of cake.

We told Frostie about Eddie Wilson and Frank Fanning. She didn't know them. If they weren't on Vice (known inelegantly as the Pussy Posse) they had nothing to do with her life. She just wanted Jerry and Piggy sent to the Big House. We went over the plan Jerry and Piggy had outlined. Lance said to Frostie, "After they leave you for the motel don't wait in the car. Haul your butt out of there. If anything goes wrong and Eddie and Frank don't take them they'll be back to the car and you'll be in deep trouble. Once they're out of sight in the motel just drive away, then leave the car somewhere."

Not to worry, said Frostie the Getaway Driver, crunching the ice from her Black Russian. "As soon as they get to the motel and can't see me I'm gone. But I ain't going to be driving no car. I don't know how to drive."

Frostie promised to call our office and leave a message on the recorder if anything changed. Otherwise we'd see her at Coffee Ron's at 2 a.m. Saturday morning, three hours after the robbery was to go down. When we left Big Al's, Darlene and Izzy Mitrovich were eating Slim Jims and playing bar dice with Big Al himself.

We wandered into the news room. Grimsby was sitting in his cubicle, feet cushioned on his desk by mounds of paper. He was reading a roll of wire-copy which curled around the floor like artwork by Cristo.

"We're all set for tonight, Roger," I told him. "We feel sure these two guys will do the robbery. If it falls through, Frostie is going to call us so we can cancel out." Grimsby glared at me over the glasses on his nose. He made the point that he would have to pay us overtime anyway, so cancellation didn't make any difference now. "Exactly how are you going to do this, I mean without you or the two cops getting killed?" he asked. A good question. It was one which had been nagging a little at both Lance and me. We went over it with him. Eddie Wilson would replace the desk clerk. Frank Fanning would hide in the back room. Frank would have a .12 gauge shotgun. Eddie would have a gun in his pants. They'd let Jerry and Piggy get the money and head for the door. At that Eddie would shout, "Thank you for not shooting." Those words (cynically suggested by me) would cause Frank to fly through the door and Eddie to pull his own gun. They would get the drop on them.

Grimsby looked ill. "You could drive a truck through the holes in that plan," he said. "Where are you two going to be hiding, in the broom closet? You and these cops sound as stupid as Piggy and his friend." Grimsby took his feet off the desk and dropped the wire-copy.

"You need backup help. You need them outside the

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office. What were you going to do, film up against the window?" (Actually that had been part of our plan, but we kept silent at this point.) "Film *outside* and your chances of getting shot might be fifty-fifty instead of a certainty."

The part about getting some extra police did strum on the right chord, I had to admit. Fanning and Wilson would lose a little glory but it wouldn't affect the story and it might even guarantee its outcome. We promised Roger we would get Frank and Eddie to call in backups. We also said we would telephone Grimsby in the newsroom at 11:45, after the news ended and (hopefully) after the robbery ended. Lance and I drove to our office on Union Street in Cow Hollow, at the foot of Pacific Heights.

Someday our block would turn into Nirvana for swarms of horny yuppies, when singles bars like Perry's and the Cooperage popped up everywhere. In 1967 it still had Victorian charm and it was still quiet. At night you could park anywhere you wanted to. For three years we had rented space over a Japanese Restaurant named Ming Gei Ya. Our office always smelled good, like tempura, or like vegetables and ginger. Two of those years we had been stringing for *Time* magazine and also shooting newsreel film. When Grimsby hired us at ABC, they agreed to pick up our rent. Our agreement with Grimsby was that we could work out of our digs if we put in an appearance at the newsroom once a day when we were in town. There were many advantages to this arrangement. Not least among them—and it was openly envied by others in the news operation—was that we were hard to keep track of.

Lance and I had one large room with windows on the street. There was a sign painted on our door. It said,

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In our large room we had two wooden desks and chairs, a couch, an editing bench with rewinds, a 16mm viewer and editing equipment. We had built shelves above the table. We were as proud of them as only truly unhandy people can be. They held our recording equipment, camera gear and police radios. This was in the days before commercially available scanners became popular. A row of battered file cabinets—they came from the Salvation Army—was along a wall. A stack of camping gear was so high it practically held up another wall. These were the accoutrements of various film expeditions. Some were successful—the search for

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the Hermit of the Sierra Nevada, for instance. Others were a definite bust, like the week spent tracking Big Foot, or our efforts to film a gold expedition in head-hunter territory in Ecuador.

I mentioned the advantages of having our office away from the ABC newsroom. The greatest of these was next door: Miss Anne Demeter of Demeter Modeling Agency fame. Actually, Miss Demeter was elderly by my (unrealistic) standards of the time. Her office wasn't much larger than ours, either. The steady stream of real and imagined models in the hall didn't let the modesty of the surroundings dampen their ambition or their desire to impress Miss Demeter. The line of hopefuls was particularly remarkable on Wednesday evenings, when Miss Demeter held her "try-outs." I never understood in model jargon precisely what that meant. But late every Wednesday afternoon Lance and I would hit the office trying to look cool and arty at the editing bench or working at our desks with the door wide open and the police radio crackling. The line of models would slowly move by, résumés and composite photos clutched under their arms. "Hi," one of us would say.

"Have you met Anne yet?" (We'd never have the guts to call her by her first name in person.)

"Uh, no, not yet," the lovely 20-year-old would say, her ash-blonde hair cascading over her slim shoulders. "Do you know her?"

"Do we know her? Why, we're practically roommates up here. Maybe we could put a word in for you."

At 7 o'clock Frank Fanning and Eddie Wilson walked in. Eddie looked ready to rock and roll, at least if the dancing was going to be in a bar in Manila. He was dressed in wraparound shades and a white short-sleeved polyester shirt of Filipino design, called a Barong. It was untucked at the waist. A half dozen pens were lined up in a plastic holder with a real estate broker's ad on its pocket flap. He was wearing a narrow green tie with a very tight knot. His double-knit pants were mud brown with white saddle-stitch. They were a couple of inches too short. He was wearing Hush Puppy shoes with thick crepe. This was his idea of how a motel desk clerk ought to look. Of course, Eddie didn't look that much different to begin with.

Frank had some bottled beer in a grocery bag. He popped them open on the edge of the editing table and passed them around.

I told them about our meeting with Frostie. I ran down what she had to say about Piggy and Jerry's plan. I said that Jerry Cook was definitely the dumber of the two and he definitely would have the gun. He was also meaner and more aggressive than Piggy, who was out trying to borrow a gun for himself. I decided I wouldn't be the one to tell them we'd need a back-up. I said, "Lance, why don't you give Frank and Eddie a rundown on what Grimsby had to say." I walked over to my desk to get a Lucky Strike.

Frank seemed to know what was coming because he looked as uncomfortable as Lance. Then he interrupted. "We've got something to tell you guys first," said Frank. "We're going to have to bring some other guys into this. We're going to need some backup. We had to tell the sergeant. I'm really sorry about this. We feel bad but we don't have any choice."

Amazing. These were our words and Frank was lip-synching them. I tried to look disappointed, which was difficult. "Jeez, Frank, what a surprise," I said. And it was.

Eddie spoke. "The sergeant said you guys would understand. I guess it really does make sense. It was just too dangerous the other way. He said if you'll just stay a block or so away we can give you a call as soon as it's over."

Lance was out of his chair like the seat had sunk its teeth into him. "Forget that," he said. "You're doing this with us or you're not doing it at all. We'll screw it up. We'll knock on every door in the projects. We'll tell them they're giving away free drinks at the motel. We'll set up lights and a tripod outside the office. We'll embarrass the hell out of you two. We won't stand for this."

Who delivered this crime to you anyway? I reminded them. We did, I said, answering my own question—Carlson and Brisson, the UPS of melodrama and TV violence.

Frank and Eddie were embarrassed. "But what the Hell can we do?" said Eddie. The sergeant is saying to us 'absolutely not, absolutely not.' How long can we argue with him? What are we supposed to say?"

"Let's go talk to him," I said. "Let's lay this out. There's no way this is happening *without* us. Let's get him on board where he belongs. Otherwise we're going to have to find Piggy and Jerry and take them out to dinner."

We found the sergeant at the Doggie Diner on Van Ness

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Avenue. He was a thin and pleasant fellow with an olive complexion and very curly hair. Everyone called him Sergeant Umbrella. His actual name was Lou Canopy. We knew him slightly.

He was working on a chili dog at a table bolted to the wall. There were no chairs or stools. The square room was brightly lighted with overhead fluorescence. The floors, the walls, and even the tables were covered in common white tile. The only significant variance in color came from dozens of wieners of differing sizes rotating slowly over aluminum rollers behind a white-tile counter. The place looked like an operating room for frankfurters.

Lance and I discussed the tack to take as we followed Eddie and Frank's unmarked Ford to the restaurant. I got the lead.

"How're you doing, sergeant?" I said as we trooped across the room towards him. He wiped the chili off his fingers with a napkin ball and shook hands with both Lance and me. "How you doing, boys?" he said, his words muffled by the remainder of a bun which he popped through his lips as we shook hands. Frank and Eddie were definitely uncomfortable.

"Could I talk with you outside for a couple of minutes, sergeant?" I said.

"No problem," he said. "Bet these two fellows told you you'd have to hang back for a while tonight when this goes down, didn't they?" he said, throwing a thumb over his shoulder towards Frank and Eddie.

"Most assuredly," I said. "There are just a couple of details we need to talk about. I'd appreciate it."

Sergeant Umbrella and I left Lance and the two patrolmen ordering coffee at the white tiled counter. We went out into the parking lot and climbed into his black and white. "So what do you want to tell me?" said the sergeant.

We had met Canopy a number of times during the investigation into the assassination of Dow Wilson and Lloyd Green, Painters Union officials. Sergeant Umbrella was an intelligent fellow. He handled himself well.

I laid out our position and our ideas as Lance and I had discussed them on the way over. The sergeant listened. We talked some more. We shook hands. He picked up his dash mike and identified himself. "I'm 10-8 back in service at Van Ness and Market. I'm heading over to the Executive Motel to check out a complaint from a citizen."

Frank and Eddie left their unmarked but very obvious police car—a dark blue banged-up three-year-old Ford with black-wall tires—in the Doggie Diner parking lot and rode over to Grove Street in our Land Rover. They wouldn't need a car. We would meet the sergeant in fifteen minutes at the motel.

Frank and Eddie were stunned by Sergeant Umbrella's change of mind. They kept bugging me to explain what we talked about.

Frank was sitting between Lance and me in the front of the Land Rover. Eddie was in the back. That meant Eddie was sitting in the darkened rear talking through a wooden partition we'd built behind the front seat. There was a trap door in it large enough for a man to crawl through. It was padlocked. We put Eddie into the compartment through the rear door. There was a chair inside bolted to the deck. This was our film truck. It was cream colored. Painted on both sides was

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in black letters. Under this, on either side, was a painted tire. The chrome hubcap in the center of each was a one-way mirror through which a person in the closed bed could see, or film. We used this truck often. When we didn't we rented it to private dicks for surveillance. We did a brisk business with it either way.

The impact of the ball bearing striking and spidering the window was exactly like the sound of a high-powered rifle bullet. Four pimps, one of them in a mink coat and with a toy poodle on a leash, fell out of the car and scrambled into a doorway for safety.

The Executive Motel had three floors, each with about thirty rooms. The building was shaped like a horseshoe surrounding a parking lot. The stairway to the second floor was on the outside and began on the corner directly across from the office. A balcony and railing ran around the rim of the shoe on the second and third floors. The office was on one prong of the horseshoe. The side of the office had a window over the sidewalk on Grove Street.

The office itself was narrow. A glass door led into it from the parking lot. Two 1950s Danish Modern chairs and a matching couch were against the wall on the right under the window. The counter was to the left. It ran almost the length of the room. There was a small inner office whose door was behind the counter near the far end. The motel was close to a freeway overpass and on the rim of a tough, mostly black neighborhood. It was also only a few blocks to City Hall.

The sergeant made the corner room on the second floor the Command Post. Its picture window looked directly across to the office seventy-five feet away on the street level. You could see plainly inside. At the moment the real desk clerk—whose name was "Mukesh" according to a pin on his shirt—was standing at the counter with Frank and Eddie. He was giving Eddie a lesson in how to run check-ins and the office for the next hour or so. Eddie would flip on the neon "No Vacancy" sign after 10:30 to keep prospective guests out of harm's way.

Mukesh the clerk would lock himself in a vacant room and watch TV until he was told to come out. Mukesh

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seemed to be Indian. He was earnest and helpful, albeit a little excited. He rooted around in a desk drawer until he found a name tag for Eddie. It said, "Hello I'm Walter. How May I Help You?" Eddie pinned this below his pen holder on his breast pocket.

We were joined by four other detectives. They had been called in by Sergeant Umbrella. Two were from Vice and two from the Robbery Detail. We knew the vice cops pretty well. They had been of considerable help to us on the documentary about hookers. Dick Lamb was one of them. He was genuinely mountainous. He was part Hawaiian and part Samoan. He wore a porkpie hat and a dirty trenchcoat as big as a pup tent. His partner was Willie Pyle. Willie was short, black, and round.

He was as tough as a winter apple. He had a heavily keloided knife scar that ran from the corner of his right eye down over his cheek and across to the lobe of his ear. He looked as if someone had tried to peel him. Willie carried a Whammo brand slingshot in the small of his back. He also carried a pocket full of steel ball bearings. He had created considerable mischief with this combination over the years. Once, Lance and I climbed with Pyle and Lamb up the rusted fire escape at the rear of the old Fillmore Theatre on Fillmore Street. We crouched behind its roof parapet and watched Willie take out the rear window of a shiny Cadillac pimp-mobile as it waited at the red light below. The impact of the ball bearing striking and spidering the window was exactly like the sound of a high-powered rifle bullet. Four pimps, one of them in a mink coat and with a toy poodle on a leash, fell out of the car and scrambled into a doorway for safety. They left the car engine running, its doors wide open, in the middle of the street. Willie was definitely a card. And he and Lamb were having fun with Eddie, calling him "Walter."

The sergeant took charge. He removed the pistol from under Eddie's Barong on the reasonable grounds that if Piggy or Jerry spotted it they would probably shoot Eddie on the spot. No need for that. Eddie had a .25 automatic in an ankle holster if he got into some kind of unexpected jam.

The sergeant nixed the idea of anyone charging out of the inner office as Frank originally planned to do. The sergeant was afraid—with real justification, it seemed to me—that Eddie would get caught in a crossfire. Sergeant Umbrella took one of the Robbery detectives named Bob Larkin, a man in his fifties with a crew cut, and put him in the back room. He was to stay there in case Piggy and Jerry decided to take Eddie into the back room. If they did that it could be reasonably assumed they had decided to kill him. Larkin had a shotgun. Eddie was to lead the way into the back. When he opened the door he was to instantly hit the deck and Larkin would fire right over him with no warning, wasting Jerry and Piggy.

Jerry and Piggy would be making a very bad career move if they decided to push Eddie into the rear quarters. The sergeant put Frank in the back of our Land Rover whose use we volunteered. We parked it across the street from the side of the office, up Grove about twenty-five feet. Frank could sit in the back with a clear view of the sidewalk and office window. Sergeant Umbrella took Larkin's car, which he had brought from home, and parked it in the lot backed up to the office door. Its bumper was about four feet from the door through which Piggy and Jerry would both come and go. This was to keep a family of tourists, say, from pulling up and parking there just as the robbery began.

Lance and I had a couple of preparations to make as well. Lance mounted a sound camera on a tripod in the window of the second floor "command post." Its long lens peered out between drawn curtains and with its powerful zoom one could see clearly and with precision inside the office across the way. To make this work even better we replaced all the light bulbs, both in the office and over the door, with flood-lamp bulbs we'd brought with us.

We then ran a cable along the second floor railing from our room, where it was plugged into the sound amplifier of our Auricon camera, to a metal mike which we hung nakedly off the balcony and down a few feet over the top of the office door.

By 10:30 everyone was in place. Mukesh had locked himself in a room a couple of doors down from us on the second floor. Sergeant Umbrella, Lance and I, and the other Robbery detective—a quiet fellow named Joe Flaherty—were in our command post. We could see Eddie very clearly through the camera view-finder. He was standing behind the counter reading the American Automobile Association magazine. He looked very much like a desk clerk.

Dick Lamb and Willie Pyle were in an unmarked car on

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a cross street intersecting Grove about a block away. Piggy and Jerry would pass them on foot on their way to the motel.

Bob Larkin was sitting at a desk in the back room of the motel office. His short barreled 12-gauge pump was loaded with double-ought buckshot. It rested on the desk facing the door.

Frank Fanning was sitting in our swivel chair in the dark bed of the Land Rover. He, too, had a shotgun. Everyone was connected by walkie-talkie.

We fidgeted in the room. Lance and Flaherty played cards on the bed. Sergeant Umbrella stood by the window. At 11:10 the walkie-talkie crackled. It was Willie Pyle. He said a white woman just got out of a car up the street and was walking down Grove on the motel side. She looks like a hooker, he said. He described her as she passed him: black boots, red pants, white fur jacket, short blonde hair. That's her, I called out.

Frank came on the air as she passed the Land Rover. We couldn't see her yet. "She's staring at the truck," said Frank. "That's because Frostie knows the Land Rover," I said. "If it's her. We'll know in a minute."

It was Frostie. She strutted down the sidewalk as we watched. She came out of the shadows alongside the office, stopped and looked in the window. She walked around the corner of the office and into the lot. She stopped in front of the door and looked through the glass at Eddie. She then headed back up Grove Street and into the dark. Piggy and Jerry should be here shortly.

Grimsby looked ill. "You could drive a truck through the holes in that plan," he said. "Where are you two going to be hiding, in the broom closet?"

Ten minutes later they came into view as we gathered around the curtains, our lights out, and watched them.

Lance began filming. He purposely had not put Frostie on film at all.

I'd seen mug shots of Piggy and Jerry but I couldn't tell one from the other. They were both wearing dark pants and dark overcoats. They stopped just short of the light from the office window. Even from where I was I could feel their paranoia. They looked suspicious almost beyond belief. They were in a half-crouch against the building as they fished for something in their pockets. They pulled masks over their faces. I realized they were women's stockings. One of them—it turned out to be Jerry—pulled a large pistol from inside of his coat and held it at a right angle as the two walked furtively past the office window and opened the glass doors. Eddie had a walkie-talkie, which he'd turned off, in a file cabinet behind him. He'd been warned they were outside. As they walked in he threw his hands in the air.

At that moment, Sergeant Umbrella slid open the door to our room and duck-walked out onto the balcony. I scooted down and followed him immediately. Flaherty followed me. I was carrying a hand-held Bell & Howell silent camera. The sergeant and Flaherty each had a pistol in his hand. The three of us crept rapidly down the stairs and onto the parking lot. Like a trio of ducks we waddled hunched over across the parking lot towards the office. We were protected from view in part by Flaherty's car. We huddled behind it. Through the rear window we could see Eddie with his hands over his head. Jerry had the pistol cocked and pointed straight at Eddie's temple. The other man was behind the counter rifling the till. I could see his flattened features through the stocking.

"Get ready," said Sergeant Umbrella.

"I hope they don't shoot my goddamned car," said Flaherty with seeming sincerity.

"You stay down," said Sergeant Umbrella to me.

Certainly, I said.

Piggy and Jerry were heading right for the door and for us. Piggy was through first. He literally had a fistful of money. I could see stray bills sticking between his fingers. The cops had loaded the drawers with ones with a twenty on top of each pile. At best they had a hundred bucks. Piggy came through the door and Jerry stepped out. His gun was pointed our way. The sergeant and Flaherty stood up simultaneously and so did I. The sergeant, I think, then yelled "police" and began to fire. Or maybe he began to fire and then yelled "police." Regardless, I saw Eddie drop under the counter inside. The money fluttered from Piggy's hand. I had the Bell & Howell pressed against my forehead and was seeing this all through its view-finder. Unbelievable. They were ten feet away. A dozen bullets were fired point blank. The office window collapsed. Then the door glass shattered too. At the moment we stood up and the shoot-out began, a flood light behind us bathed the entire scene in a white light. It created a sort of tableau. Everyone seemed to freeze: the three of us in a line facing Jerry and Piggy over the vinyl roof of Flaherty's 1965 Plymouth, which was about to lose paint to ricochet bullets.

The light was moving. It was Lance. He had disconnected the sound camera from the tripod, mounted it on his shoulder with a mike and a floodlight, and at that moment was careening across the parking lot towards us like a giant stork caught in a metal contraption. Jerry and Piggy must have thought Rod Serling was about to pop up and do a "Twilight Zone" intro.

The tableau broke. Jerry and Piggy raced around the corner onto the sidewalk with the four of us in pursuit. Lance's light fell on their backs as they sprinted up Grove.

Jerry Cook was in the lead. An explosion rang out in the dark. Jerry dropped like a weight thrown from a roof. Piggy tripped and fell over him skidding along the sidewalk on his

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hands and knees. Piggy scrambled to his feet but slipped and fell in Jerry's blood. Flaherty and the sergeant landed on him. They slammed him against a wood fence and handcuffed him. Jerry's gun lay on the sidewalk a few feet away. Jerry had been hit in the head with double ought slugs. Blood was pouring through his stocking mask. He struggled to his knees and seemed to be saying something. He slid forward on his face in the black pool of blood growing around him. "You saw what happened to your friend," said Flaherty. "He ain't my friend," said Piggy. "I never seen him before in my life."

Frank Fanning was standing in the middle of the dark street. He had his shotgun pointing down. He was still in the spot where he'd pulled the trigger and killed Jerry Cook. Willie Pyle and Dick Lamb drove up. Eddie ran up with Larkin from the back room. Eddie looked at Jerry who was clearly dying, or perhaps already dead. "That guy's hands were shaking so bad I thought he was going to shoot me for sure," said Eddie.

The sergeant got on Pyle and Lamb's radio and called for a couple of uniformed black-and-whites, the coroner and a homicide unit. Homicide handled all police-related shootings. A paddy wagon drove up with two patrolmen in the front. They had been drawn by all the radio traffic.

It was about 11:30. I left Lance filming and began to walk back to the motel office to call Grimsby. A beer bottle flew out of the dark and hit the sidewalk near my feet. It didn't break but skidded across the pavement and struck the building next to the motel. I heard a lot of shouting. I could barely see people across the street. It was a crowd and it was moving out into the street and our way. I walked back to the knot around Jerry and Piggy. A rock hit the fence. I could hear shouts of "Hey pig. Hey pig." I could see a group of maybe twenty men and a couple of women, all black, out in the street. They were working themselves into quite a snit.

Lance shined his light on them. I recognized LeRoi Jones, the crazy poet. I recognized a couple of others. This is bizarre, I thought. How did they get here so fast? Did they come on a bus? We learned later that Jones' apartment was in the building directly across from the motel. In one of those coincidences that no one would believe if it were connected to the Kennedy assassination, Jones had actually invited more than a dozen Bay Area black radicals to some kind of Black Power meeting shortly before the shooting began.

Now these were people who were pissed off on the best of days, so you can imagine the mood they had worked themselves into watching Jerry's life ooze away on a sidewalk covered with pigs.

Neighbors were arriving from up and down the street, and Jones and friends were working to get them excited. The sergeant grabbed some chalk from Pyle's car. He drew a fast circle around Jerry's body, right through the blood. He put another circle around the gun and dropped it into an evidence bag. "Screw homicide. Screw the coroner. We're going to have a riot here if we don't get this body off the sidewalk. Grab a leg," he said to Flaherty.

At the sergeant's order, the paddy wagon backed up on the sidewalk, momentarily blocking the scene from the crowd across the street. Bottles and rocks were arriving with more frequency. One bounced off the wagon's roof. The sergeant, Flaherty, Pyle, and Lamb each grabbed one of Jerry's limbs. Mukesh the clerk was standing nearby. He was stupefied. Piggy was still trying to act as if he didn't know Jerry—in fact just happened to be wandering by when this whole weird scene went down—but he too was watching this intently over his shoulder. Bob Larkin had his large white hand in the center of Piggy's back, pressing the side of his face against the fence. I grabbed the keys from Frank who was still looking dazed. I was about to cross the street to get the Land Rover when I saw the rear doors of the wagon open and realized where they were taking Jerry.

Sergeant Umbrella had Jerry by the nape of his coat, holding on with both hands. Pyle and Lamb each had legs. Jerry's head was hanging down, weighted by a ball of gore which had collected like a goiter in the stocking mask. The three men propelled Jerry across the shiny metal threshold of the wagon until he was almost well inside, then threw him. At the far end of the inside bench sat a drunken white man, his feet pulled up beneath him, a look of terror on his face as Jerry's body skidded to a halt, head-first against the wall.

Larkin pulled Piggy back away from the fence and began dragging him backward by his handcuffs. Piggy's pants and much of his coat were painted with Jerry's blood where Piggy had slipped and fallen in it.

Willie Pyle looked at Piggy and Larkin. "We're not taking that guy in this car, not like that," he said to Larkin. Larkin looked to Sergeant Umbrella. "Put him in the wagon," said the sergeant. That got Piggy's attention. He looked horrified, then outraged. "No way," he shouted. "I ain't getting in there with no dead body. Not with him," he said, gesturing at the wagon.

"Well, I can appreciate that," said Larkin. "I heard you say you didn't know this guy. Man, I wouldn't want to be locked in no dark wagon with a dead guy I didn't know either. So you sure have my sympathy." As he was saying this he was pulling Piggy backward toward the wagon's rear platform. The crowd across the street was screaming and swearing, although they could see little of this. A couple of black-and-whites had pulled up. Uniformed cops were out in the street arguing with the crowd. There was pushing and shoving. Larkin was a big guy. When Piggy backed into the wagon Larkin spun him around and shoved him up and through the doors head first, slamming the door behind him and locking it.

I watched the wagon begin to lumber down the street. Lance was filming it. The "SFPD" in worn gold letters at the back reflected Lance's floodlight. I could hear muffled shouting inside. Presumably it was Piggy. It could have been the drunk. It certainly wasn't Jerry. As the wagon pulled away a thin black line rolled under the rear door and

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continued down and across the step where it dropped off onto the street. It was Jerry's blood.

Much of the crowd of very annoyed people was spread around the Land Rover. I walked over to the truck door and took a great deal of heat from them. Lots of shouting, a little pushing. Hey, what do I know, was my general refrain. I'm just a guy with a tire truck trying to make a living. You got a gripe with the police go tell a police about it. They're right over there. Now, out of the way.

I made a quick U-turn and pulled up next to Willie Pyle and Dick Lamb. A rock hit the side of the Land Rover. It was close to our one-way mirrors. They cost a week's wage.

"Lance," I said. "Throw that gear in this truck. It is time to be off." And so we were.

I called Grimsby from a pay phone. He'd left the station. It was close to midnight. I knew where to find him. It was Friday night. The bartender at The Buena Vista Cafe sounded harried, but he went and got Grimsby for me anyway. Grimsby was a star in this joint.

"Roger," I said when he came on the line. "Nothing happened. You have to pay us overtime and it was all for zero." There was only silence, or at least only the sound of yelling, screaming and the Lovin' Spoonful on the jukebox, but no comment from Grimsby. I said, "Just a joke, Roger. Film at 11. You won't believe it. Meet us in the newsroom. We'll see you there in a half hour."

Stu Williams and Roger Grimsby came into the empty newsroom together. They were pretty loaded. Stu had decided to stay in the City and had booked a hotel room. Both wives were angry with him for some reason. He was tired, he said, and wanted to go to bed without arguing. But he did want to hear the story first. So please tell it all. And we did.

"Okay," Grimsby said. "I want to know how you got the sergeant to change his mind after he told you to butt out."

I said, "We made him a simple offer. He was smart enough to recognize it. I told him we would agree to keep Frostie out of the story. The robbery was self-authenticating. She would make a terrible witness anyway, a sure impeachment for the defense. So, you ask me—as did the sergeant—how would the cops know about the robbery? Well, basically they would know about it because of the good police work of one Sergeant Lou Canopy. It would be his prescience and his good judgement which would bring this case to justice. He was an observant officer and one very responsive to the public. Sergeant Canopy listened to the citizen who came up to him in the Doggie Diner parking lot. He listened when the man told him he knew a woman, knew her well, who had overheard two men—Jerry and Piggy by name—planning an armed robbery of the Executive Motel that very night, in just a couple of hours. The sergeant would then be smart enough to realize that this guy—who wouldn't give his name, by the way—has some kind of credibility. He sounds like he knows what he's talking about, though usually these tips are bummers. I pointed out to the sergeant, perhaps gratuitously, how much credit will accrue to him with his superiors because he had sufficient street intuition to follow this tip up as he did, and to organize the stake-out successfully."

"Cute," said Grimsby. "But what about the two of you? How does the sergeant explain to his Lieutenant and his Captain that you are both in the act?"

"As you can imagine," I said, "the sergeant asked me the same question. The answer is, of course, always tell the truth. Tell them these two news dopes said they were listening to a police radio in their office. They noticed many strange and cryptic references to 'Grove Street' and to the 'Executive Motel.' They may not be the sharpest tools in the shed but they've got *some* sense. They wandered over—and fell right into the crime scene. You've seen them around, Lieutenant. We couldn't get rid of them. They actually threatened to drive up as the robbery was underway if we didn't let them in. What could I do, arrest them? I said, that's what you tell them if they ask, sergeant, but they probably won't. People who take risks in life get ahead. That's how they go from Sergeant Umbrella to Lieutenant Canopy, if you get my drift. And I understand you are on the promotion list. I understand you are near the top. Of course, if we really screwed this up it could sink you. But we won't. In fact, we'll do it right and it will bring you right over the top! That's what I told him. As I said, he's a smart guy. It took him about thirty seconds to change his mind. And now, on the only existent news film of this unseemly but interesting event he is the Hero of the Day or the Hero of the Hour or something."

Stu had fallen into a deep sleep across the assignment desk. →

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Coffee Ron's was quiet when we arrived at 2:30 a.m. It had just opened. It would be jammed at 4:00. Frostie and Pogo were sitting at a back table. Pogo was in her school uniform. She was asleep with her head on her book bag.

Frostie was wearing her mangy rabbit-fur jacket. It was warm in the place. She looked tired. Small wonder. The waitress brought coffee mugs. Frostie took a pint of Seagram's blended whiskey from her bag and poured a couple of fingers into each cup.

We asked Frostie if she knew what had happened. She did. She had called the motel office and talked with someone, probably Mukesh—who said the robber with the gun died and the other man went to jail. He seemed excited by all this, she said.

We asked her how she got out of the neighborhood. She snorted and grinned. "I was walking fast up Grove. I was worried that Piggy and Jerry would come back. I had taken their car key. Man, I don't like those dark streets over there. I was tooling along and a guy in a Volkswagen drove by looking at me. I waved him over and we turned a trick for $20 in the parking lot of the school there. He gave me a ride to Turk and Taylor and I picked up Pogo at my girlfriend's."

Piggy and Jerry were heading right for the door and for us. Piggy was through first, he literally had a fistful of money. I could see stray bills sticking between his fingers.

"I have a couple of questions, Frostie," I said. "They have to do with guns. I gather Piggy never got hold of one. They didn't find a gun on him and the cop behind the counter didn't see one."

Frostie was lighting a Kool. Her fingernails were painted purple with little gold squiggles on them. They shined in the lighter flame. She said, "Piggy tried to borrow one. Or he said he did. He said his cousin was supposed to bring one over but he got drunk and never showed up. Piggy had a screwdriver. He showed it to me because it was sharpened down."

"We went down to the Hall of Justice tonight after the shooting," I said. "We wanted to get a shot of Jerry being wheeled into the morgue. Plus we needed film of Jerry's gun. The cops showed us the gun. It was loaded with blanks. Blanks! They thought that was unbelievable. No wonder I didn't get shot. The guy went into a robbery with a dud gun. Did you know that?"

Frostie laughed and blew out a cloud of mentholated smoke. She said, "I don't know anything about guns. Jerry said he stole that one. It must have had blanks in it to begin with. Jerry was a pretty dumb guy. He was one sandwich short for the picnic, you know. Man, those boys didn't have no luck with guns, did they?"

"No luck at all," said Lance. He raised his chipped coffee mug. "Here's to you, Frostie." We banged our cups. "You've got so much brass you clank when you walk. Here's to brass and here's to luck."

Postscript

Alvin "Piggy" Roberts was charged with both armed robbery and first degree murder. (California law in 1967 allowed any participant in a crime to be charged with murder one if another person was killed during the commission of that crime. The fact that the deceased, Jerome Cook, was an armed accomplice to the crime which resulted in his own death made no difference under the law.) Piggy was stabbed to death about 1978 in Folsom Prison by another inmate during an argument about food.

Sergeant Umbrella was promoted to Lieutenant in 1968. He was top man on the list that year.

Frank Fanning and Eddie Wilson were both promoted to the Detective Bureau of the SFPD within two years of the robbery.

Uncle Stu Williams died of a heart attack on the third hole of the El Dorado Country Club near Palm Springs in 1989. He was 71.

In 1968, Roger Grimsby left San Francisco for ABC New York. For almost two decades he was a popular anchorman there, known for his droll behavior. He is now retired and lives with his wife Maria in a cavernous apartment in Manhattan. In 1988, Dick Carlson spoke at a banquet in the ballroom of the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in honor of Roger Grimsby's sixtieth birthday.

Lance Brisson received a fellowship from the American Political Science Association in 1971 after working as a reporter for *Look* magazine. He is now a successful political consultant. He specializes in strategic planning. He is 51 years old and lives in Encino, California, with his wife Lane and their children.

James "Fillmore Slim" Jones was convicted in 1971 of the beating of two prostitutes with a coat-hanger. His present whereabouts are unknown.

Margaret "Darlene" Hibbs continued to work in San Francisco as a prostitute. She died of a drug overdose in the Tenderloin in the summer of 1974. She was 28 years old.

Izzy Mitrovich died in his apartment over Big Al's in 1979. He was about 95 years old.

"Frostie" and Pogo left San Francisco for Las Vegas a few months after the robbery. Frostie worked briefly as a prostitute for an out-call service but she was not successful. In 1970 she married a blackjack dealer. A few years later they moved to Southern California, where they opened a restaurant. In 1990 they were still running it. She no longer uses the name Frostie.

Pogo is now about 30 years old. She is a school teacher near Los Angeles. She visits her mother regularly. ❐

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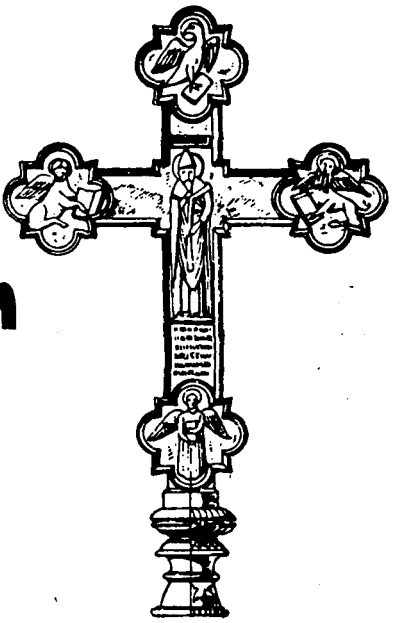
How to Believe Without Losing Your Mental Balance



The myth persists that religion is the preserve of the gullible, irrational, and fanatical. Yet, from Harvard to Berkeley, and among inquisitive people generally, there's an undeniable renewal of interest in traditional religion. This fascination is largely the result of the failure of secular substitutes for religion (such as positivism, hedonism, consumerism, technological utopianism, and Marxism) to give abidingly satisfying answers to the truly significant puzzles in life: evil, goodness, suffering, love, death, and the meaning of it all. Contrary to stereotypes, this religious renaissance does not imply an indifference to peace, justice, and human dignity; nor does it signify a hostility to science, only an appreciation of the limits of science and technology.

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An ecumenical monthly edited by lay Catholics, we've been characterized by George Will as "splendid," by the University of Chicago's Martin Marty as "lively," by *Newsweek* as "thoughtful," by *Library Journal* as "brilliant," and by Christopher Derrick, England's foremost Catholic apologist, as "by far the best Catholic magazine in the English-speaking world." Frankly, we're "influential," to quote the *Los Angeles Times*.

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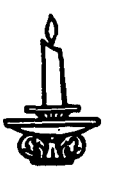

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Off the Straight and Narrow

by John Corry

Beware when the press plows new moral ground. Homosexuality is now all over page one and the evening news, although reasonable people may find that stories about it are suspect. "Don't ask, don't tell" applies to the new journalistic rules as well as to a prescription for gays in the military. When the media report on homosexuality they do so with one eye closed, as if fearful of finding something unpleasant. Homosexuality must be seen as widespread, healthy, and even endearing, and to see it as anything else is to violate the new moral canon. Stories are shaped accordingly.

Last spring, for example, the reputable Battelle Human Affairs Research Center in Seattle released a survey that found that only 1.1 percent of American males described themselves as exclusively homosexual, while only 2 percent reported a homosexual experience in the last decade. ABC's "World News Tonight" dismissed the finding with a single skeptical sentence, while NBC's "Nightly News" ignored it. "Nightline" and the "MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour," both of which ordinarily enjoy windy discussions of gay issues, ignored it, too. The 1.1 percent figure could not possibly be correct. If it were, the media attention focused on homosexuals might seem excessive, and only a homophobe would want that.

Nonetheless, the figure was consistent with similar studies here and in Europe, none of which had ever come close to confirming Dr. Alfred Kinsey's old estimate of 10 percent. It did not matter. Within weeks of the publication of Battelle's finding, *Newsweek* did a cover story on lesbians. It said there were "2 to 3 million of them in the United States—far fewer than the approximately 5 percent of the population represented by gay men." *Newsweek* did not disclose who had counted the lesbians, although the 5 percent figure, raising the Battelle figure by a factor of four or five, was clearly its own. On the other hand, by media standards, the estimate was quite reasonable. Just before *Newsweek* was on the newsstands, "60 Minutes" did a report called "Gay Cops." It centered on a former New York police officer who has found life more enjoyable in San Francisco. It also introduced us to a gay FBI agent identified only as "Jim."

Jim, his back to the camera, said that the FBI had recruited women and blacks, but not gays, which clearly displeased Mike Wallace. He asked Jim how many FBI agents were in the closet, and Jim said about one out of ten. "About the same proportion as in society," Wallace said smoothly, and raised the Battelle figure by a factor of ten.

Obviously, some statistics about homosexuals are more acceptable than others. The same week that "60 Minutes" was reaffirming Dr. Kinsey's discredited estimate—actually, Kinsey admitted he was never sure himself—NBC's "Nightly News" reported on gay purchasing power. NBC might have ignored the Battelle figures as irrelevant or unscientific, but on some matters, it could be precise. It said gays spent $514 billion a year and lesbians preferred Toyotas over all other cars, while among male homosexuals Toyota was number two. NBC also reported quite cheerfully on the growing spate of androgynous ads. Androgyny, you must understand, is acceptable, and perhaps even preferable, in the new moral canon.

Serious people may be bemused by much of this. Media vagaries are divorced from real life. The matter of gays in the military, though, is really too important for either vagaries or the new canon. When Bill Clinton made his first dreamy pronouncement about lifting the ban on gays, television did a number of stories about homosexuality in other armies. Canada and Europe's NATO countries were usually cited. "Macho, Tough and Gay," a report on "60 Minutes," was typical. It may seem inappropriate to pick on "60

John Corry is a former New York Times *media critic and the author of* My Times: Adventures in the News Trade, *forthcoming from Putnam.*

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Minutes" twice in one column, but as much as anything on television, its little mini-movies are paradigms of media thinking.

"Macho, Tough and Gay"—it sounded like an ad for a leather bar—focused on a lieutenant colonel in the Dutch army who, according to "60 Minutes," got along well with his men, and fully expected to rise in rank despite his homosexuality. In a tattle-tale mood, he even confided to Ed Bradley that he knew of gay generals in the United States Army.

Nonetheless, the report was distinguished more by what it left out than by what it included. The Netherlands does not have much of an army, and the entire Dutch military establishment will be reduced to only 39,000 when conscription ends in five years. Indeed, all European NATO countries except Britain have conscription, and their armies must accept homosexuals whether they want to or not. They know if they make homosexuality a bar to military service, large numbers of draftees will announce they are gay as soon as they receive their induction notices.

Meanwhile, "60 Minutes" also neglected to mention that most Dutch troops live at home, and barracks life is limited. The gay lieutenant colonel may get along with his men because he and they do not share quarters. Nonetheless, he may be right when he says he expects a promotion. Homosexuals in the Dutch army have their own union. The lieutenant colonel might call a strike if he is passed over for full colonel. Suggestions by "60 Minutes" to the contrary, the Dutch experience is not applicable to the United States. The Canadian experience is not either, even though it was so often cited. The Canadian army is smaller than the Metropolitan Toronto police force, and, as the *Toronto Globe and Mail* has glumly reported, it has more generals than tanks—130 to 113—and no one expects it ever to go to war.

Which leaves us with, among other things, the coverage by America's most prestigious newspaper. Unfortunately, though, the *New York Times* has embraced the new canon. Indeed, it seems to want to expand it. The aggressively trendy—and increasingly incomprehensible—Sunday "Styles" section appears determined to legitimize all aberrant lifestyles, while the editorial page sees homophobia, sexism, or racism at the root of most problems. Granted that literate adults do not read the "Styles" section. Granted, too, that the editorial page has become less interested in persuading readers about the correctness of its positions than in finding new ways to have tantrums. One can put up with all that, but it is disturbing to find the news columns bent out of shape. There are days when the *Times* seems to be edited by ACT-UP and Larry Kramer.

Thus the coverage of gays in the military; it really has been quite terrible. Colin Powell, for instance, delivered the commencement address at Harvard, and a small number of gay activists turned their backs. Overwhelmingly, though, Powell's reception was favorable. The *Times* story noted this in the first paragraph, but the rest of the story solicited the views of the activists. Or, Sam Nunn and the Senate Armed Services Committee visited the naval base at Norfolk, Virginia, and found that most of the sailors did not want homosexuals as shipmates. The page-one story in the *Times*, however, led with what might have been the only petty officer at the base who said he couldn't care less.

The thinking here may seem baffling, although discerning readers can find clues. Other news organizations, for example, noted that Major General Harold Campbell, who was forced to retire from the Air Force for making disparaging remarks about Bill Clinton, had termed the president "gay loving." *Times* stories, though, did not mention that. Instead they said that Campbell had called Clinton a "dope smoking," "skirt chasing," "draft dodging" commander-in-chief. Apparently, the *Times* had decided that those terms were derisive, but that "gay loving" was not. It had applied the ACT-UP and Larry Kramer test.

In fact, the test is not always that subtle, and on occasion its guidelines stand out in sharp relief. When Marine Colonel Fred Peck, who opposed lifting the ban on homosexuals in the military, told the Senate he would fear for the life of his gay son if the young man joined the armed services, the *Times* buried his testimony in the last two paragraphs of the jump on a page-one story. Then it corrected its mistake. Two days later it carried another story—not about Colonel Peck, of course, but about the son, a student at the University of Maryland, and how he had felt about disclosing his homosexuality to his father. A week later, the young man turned up in the *Times* again, this time on page one. He said homosexuals were just like everyone else, and that the ban should be lifted on gays in the military. The *Times*'s editorial page was so overcome by all this that it made him the subject of an editorial.

America's premier newspaper has been stacking the deck. Journalism allows room for maneuver, and reporters and editors are allowed to make choices. The *Times* can find unlimited space for Colonel Peck's son and any number of closeted, unidentified gays, but it averts its eyes from those it disagrees with. On gay issues, most of big media does this, too. Only the *Washington Times* interviewed Major Charles B. Johnson, who had written to the commandant of the Marine Corps: "The new interim policy on homosexuals serving in the military

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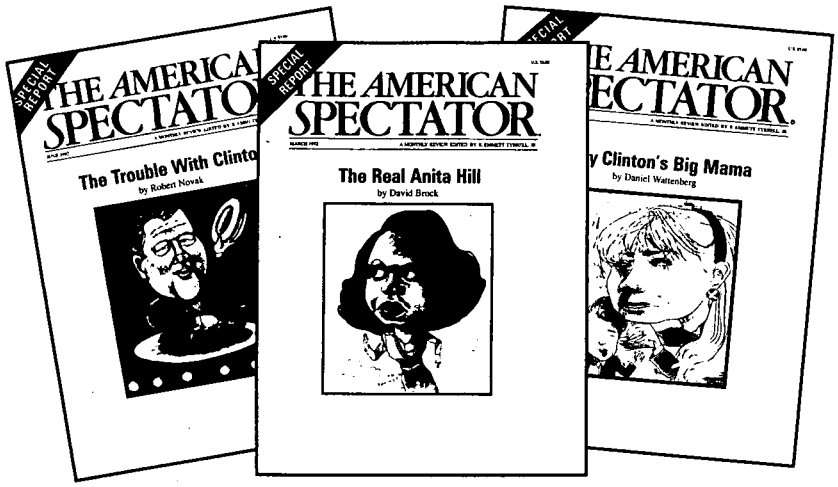

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constitutes an illegal order. I therefore tender my resignation at the government's earliest convenience."

Major Johnson is an interesting man. As a captain in 1983, he waved his service pistol at three Israeli tanks that tried to force their way into an American-controlled area in Beirut and stopped them in their tracks. His picture was on front pages. Later Major Johnson served in the Gulf War. Moreover, he has a Ph.D. in policy analysis, and when he offered his resignation, he was only three years away from a pension. It is hard to think of him as anything other than principled, and in an interview with Michael Hedges he got down to what had escaped most of the media. "To change the policy is not only stupid, it is illegal," he said of the president's proposal. "It will cause unnecessary deaths in combat of soldiers, sailors, and airmen. These will be capricious deaths that won't accomplish anything, and that makes them illegal."

Give the media all the best of it, and say that, because Major Johnson was only expressing an opinion, they were not obligated to report it. It is harder, though, to excuse the inattention to facts. Despite all the attention being paid to gays in the military and the lamentations about witch hunts, the *Washington Times* seemed to be the only newspaper to report on a study of courts martial by the Army's judge advocate general. The study found that eight of every ten homosexuals the army had court-martialed for sexual misconduct in the previous four years had been involved in a sexual assault. Moreover, nearly half the 102 assault cases had involved child molestation. So much for all the witch hunts. The *Washington Times*, using documents it obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, also reported that the army prosecuted at least sixteen soldiers for lesbian or homosexual activity during the Gulf War. They included six male soldiers, one of them a West Point graduate who took part in what army investigators called a "sex ring" in occupied Iraq.

This is all terribly unattractive, of course, and has no place in the new canon. Better to have a television correspondent chat up a Dutch officer or a newspaper reporter chase after a colonel's son. We are witnessing the neutering of journalism, with nothing substantive to replace it. ❐

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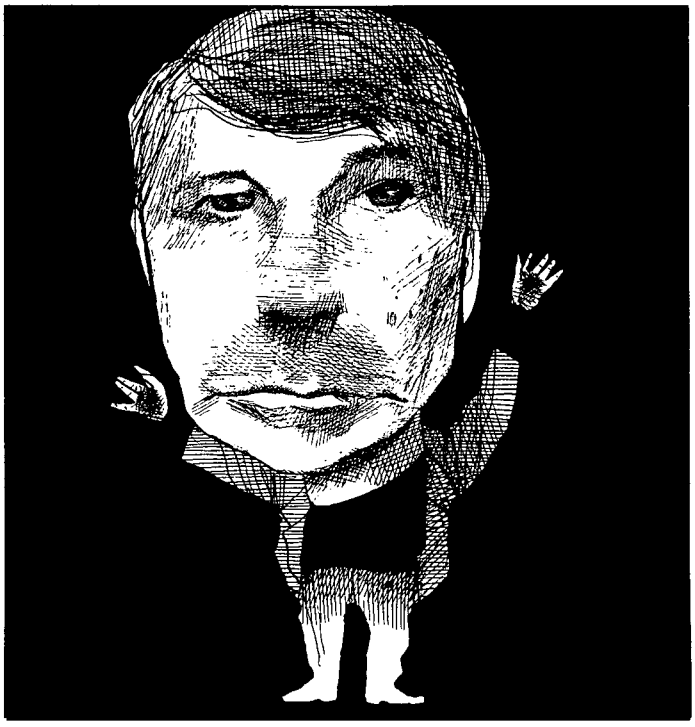
Mom, Can I Go Out to Pray?

by Francis X. Rocca

The Baltimore Arena is a forlorn place. Less than half a mile away are the expensive shops of Harborplace and the state-of-the-art ballpark at Camden Yards, but the Arena's neighbors are porno stores and fried chicken outlets. Inside, its concrete walls are crumbling. From the rafters hang mementos of the Baltimore (now Washington) Bullets, including a banner proclaiming them "1947-1948 BAA Champions." Instead of basketball, this is now a venue for indoor soccer and lacrosse. On Thursday, June 17, it is the setting for "Miracle Day 93: The Baltimore Revival."

The date marks thirty years since the Supreme Court ruled that prayer in public schools was unconstitutional. Baltimore has a special link to that event, since it was the city of Madalyn Murray O'Hair, the atheist who brought the suit that led to the ruling; and the organizer of tonight's rally has a special link to her: he is her son, William J. (Bill) Murray, now a Christian evangelist.

Murray is the author of *My Life Without God*, *Nicaragua: Portrait of a Tragedy*, and an annotated edition of the U.S. Constitution, all for sale along with video tapes and Miracle Day T-shirts at tables by the entrances. He is a veteran of "Sally Jesse Raphael," "Today," and "Good Morning America." Murray's eccentric notoriety may account for a bit of tonight's attendance, but this event is co-sponsored by four churches in Maryland and nearby Pennsylvania, and most of the 5,000 people here (in a facility that holds 12,000) will show that they have come out of more than idle curiosity.



They are still walking in when the music begins at seven. Among them are a tall, blond teenager whose T-shirt, emblazoned with the portrait of a thorn-crowned Christ, proclaims him "Won by One"; a paunchy, unshaven laborer in a tank-top; a bearded, bespectacled office worker in a tie and short-sleeved shirt; and a slim, middle-aged woman in a floral-print spring dress. No more than ten percent of the congregants are black, yet it is they who seem most at home. The black worshippers are the first to raise their arms at high points in the music, and they are saying "Amen" long before the preacher asks them to. When the Rev. J. R. Damiani, master of ceremonies, introduces the leaders of local high school bible clubs—part of a growing movement sanctioned by the 1990 Supreme Court decision in *Board of Education* v. *Mergens*—half of them are black.

Then Damiani introduces the first major attraction of the evening, the man who "ministered to our church on Super Bowl Sunday—and it *was* a super Sunday." To great cheers, Phil Driscoll runs on stage. He wears a purple check jacket over black T-shirt and slacks; his blond mane is cut like a rockabilly musician's, short on the sides and down past his shoulders in back. After a proficient jazz trumpet solo he launches into a series of rock songs: a mournful ballad on the Passion leads into an everybody-clap-your-hands number called "He's Alive Again," which sounds like the theme to one of the *Rocky* movies. The driving, throbbing beat reminds one of the debate among conservative Christians as to whether or not rock music is compatible with devotional lyrics. As Jimmy Swaggart used to point out, before he lost his credibility on such matters: "You know why they call it 'rock 'n' roll,' don't you?"

The kids aren't screaming, but they're not smirking either, and their boomer parents are tapping toes. Even the senior citizens are smiling, no doubt glad that, if there must be rock, at least it's about Jesus. Phil, who confesses between sets

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that he used to be "a hell raiser" but is now "a heaven raiser," must strike them as a nice young man, despite the funny haircut.

The nice man's message is a tough one. Driscoll says that "the world needs warrior Christians, not Mr. Rogers Christians," and sings "We are the Warriors, / Storming the gates of Hell." This is followed by a jazzed-up, hip-grinding "How Great Thou Art"; "America the Beautiful" in the groaning Joe Cocker manner; and a literally howling "Our Father" (yes, the prayer).

The message is no milder in the educational portion of the evening. Dr. Matthew Staver, a Clark Kent lookalike, spends a few minutes establishing the Judeo-Christian heritage of the United States and tracing the drift of Western culture as a whole from its Christian moorings: from the fractious Age of Dogmatism, through the hubristic Age of Reason and the atheistic Age of Evolution, to the current Age of De-education, a period of persecution inaugurated by the U.S. Supreme Court precisely thirty years ago today. Staver makes his case with quotes from Aristotle, Martin Luther, Patrick Henry, John Quincy Adams, Thomas Huxley, and Calvin Coolidge. The audience, which whistled and chuckled appreciatively when told that Staver "speaks fluent Greek, Aramaic, Hebrew, and Syriac," listens absorbedly to him now.

Yet before he is done Staver proves that he is as much a preacher as a pedagogue. His voice gets louder as he recounts a series of depredations by John Frohnmayer, the ACLU, and others. ("It's the devil, the devil," a woman behind me exclaims.) These indictments alternate with scenes from the Passion, and after each episode comes the somber, defiant refrain: "But that was Friday. [Pause.] Sunday's coming." At the end, when he asks his listeners if they will join him in the struggle, he has them repeatedly shouting, "Yes!"

At last, more than an hour-and-a-half into what was billed as a two-hour event (it will last almost three), the star arrives: a stocky, lisping man wearing either a toupee or too much hair spray. After making a pitch for donations (a $25 "love offering" fetches a video of tonight's proceedings), Bill Murray tells the grim story of his family and his nation. He interweaves AIDS and crime statistics with revelations of his mother's occultism and his own childhood boozing. The social and the personal are inextricably linked, historically and providentially: "I was part of the family that kicked God out of America. I know the truth better than any man in America. That is why God picked me to tell it."

It all hinges on the banishment of prayer. Thirty years ago, school nurses in Murray's native Baltimore handed out Band-Aids and aspirin, the latter only with permission from home; now they put contraceptive implants into teenage girls' arms without telling their parents. Drugs were unknown here, except among the sailors who came into port; now the city has "a mayor who wants to legalize crack cocaine." (Kurt Schmoke, mayor since 1988, has won the support of William F. Buckley, Jr. for his stands on drug legalization and Norplant, but conservatives by the Book will be harder to persuade.)

While Murray reminisces, the trace of a "Bawmer" drawl is detectable, but when he comes to the scandals of today—the antics of the Clinton administration prominent among them—his raised voice shows the influence of his adopted Dallas: "I" becomes *Ah* and "my," *mah*. It is an angry voice, but its words are not those of belligerence, which some hear in all but the most blandly tolerant religious exhortations. "Those people out there with needles in their arms are not your enemy, Church. They are your mission field!" The response is a fervent collective "Amen." And while the spirit of his words is certainly righteous, it is not self-righteous; he doesn't lay the final blame on liberal elites in Hollywood and Washington. "America has ungodly leaders because America has ungodly voters." Before one can reform the government or save anybody else's soul he must save his own, and for that he must repent. That is what Bill Murray is inviting everyone to do tonight.

Many in the audience are crying as Murray makes a promise to the despairing: "If the Lord Jesus Christ could knock me off a bar stool and put me up on this pulpit, then He can reach out with His nail-scarred hands to you. If my *mother herself* would walk up this aisle and ask for forgiveness, she could be saved."

It is tempting to speculate on the psychology of a man who blames his mother for the ills of his country. Perhaps his anger at her is so great that nothing less than a crusade is adequate for its expression. Certainly he has cause for anger ("My brother and I are both illegitimate—and my mother is *proud* of that, she boasts of it"), but it is not the legitimacy of Murray's grievances that distinguishes his sermon from the "Mommie Dearest" recriminations of other celebrities' children. It is the message of repentance and salvation that dignifies his suffering, and it is for this—with Murray's coaxing, little by little at first and then by the hundreds—that the people come walking up the aisle. ❐

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The Pink Fish

by Benjamin J. Stein

Friday

It's much too early in the morning, maybe 6 a.m., and I'm wandering around downtown near City Hall, looking for the crew parking for *North*, the new Rob Reiner movie I'm to play a small part in. In fact, I play the curator of the Smithsonian. But I'm lost and I can't find the crew parking lot where I'm to transfer to a bus to get to my trailer.

What I can find is an almost unbelievable number of homeless people lying on the sidewalks, still asleep sometimes, others just awakening and stirring. There are black men, white men, Latinos, young men, old men, some women. They look horrible. Splotchy skin, hair in tufts, growing sadly, clothes matted with dirt and grime. There are hundreds of these people just in the few blocks where I'm lost. How can this be happening? I hate this.

Finally, I found the crew parking area. I pulled in, and suddenly I was in a different world. Neat, organized, with happy men and women ready to take on the challenge and excitement of the day. Much better.

I found my trailer and was brought a huge plate of bacon and toast, then many glasses of orange juice. Then makeup, where I sat next to a woman actor named Julia Louis-Dreyfus. She's one of the stars of "Seinfeld," and she's as friendly as can be. She told me she grew up in Spring Valley, an extremely lovely neighborhood in Washington, D.C.

I told her that I had grown up not far away in Silver Spring, but that when I was a young guy, Spring Valley, like much of Washington's Northwest area, was restricted against Jews. We could drive by and look, but could not own or rent there *as a matter of law*. This was in the 1950s and up to the early 1960s.

Julia couldn't get over it. She's Jewish, and had never heard of such a thing. She was virtually speechless about it. Amazing how America has changed in just a few decades. It reminded me of something. After Julia left, I asked my makeup man, who was also from the east, if he remembered how newspaper want ads used to break down categories by "white" and "colored."

"No," he said, as he applied some matte makeup. "That must have been before my time." (Entirely too much of what I remember turns out to be before other people's time.)

"But it's true," I said. "In the *Washington Post*, even, if there were ads for apartments, the ads would have a heading like 'rentals—colored' or 'rentals—white.' Even for jobs, there would be headings like 'situations wanted—colored' and 'situations wanted—white.' That was just the way things were."

"Look up at the ceiling," the makeup man said. "I have to put this under your eyes. It has to go right along the eyelid."

I did as told, but I thought that some day I'd like to do a TV show about all the social progress of the last forty years. It's a sort of miracle, and to hear Bill Clinton tell it, it never happened at all, and things in this country steadily got worse.

I studied the script in my trailer for a couple of hours, then had more bacon, and then went over to City Hall, which had been rented as a set and rigged up to replicate the Smithsonian's fanciful Hall of Achievement.

We rehearsed a few times. I noticed that to my left was a large glass display case in which were two humans under hot lights, for long periods. They were the stand-ins for the stars, who are going to play the parts of the comatose parents. What a world. Live humans kept under glass—and begging for the job!

We did the scene a few times. I had to memorize about ten lines, but I did it, and Rob Reiner said he was happy, and that was that. Lunchtime.

Tables had been set on the grassy lawn of City Hall. Rob Reiner and other honchos sat at my little table. We talked about whether *Jurassic Park* would be a hit. Rob Reiner said yes, and someone else, whose name I forget, said no.

The food was astoundingly good. Fish, steak-ka-bob, salad, nuclear waste (just kidding), pudding, vegetables. Enough for a

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king. "We give the leftovers to the homeless," a cook said to me. "They love it when we shoot downtown."

Monday

Lunch with my pal C., an Alabaman who happens to find herself here in Los Angeles working part-time as an assistant to a director. She's a lively, attractive black-eyed brunette girl of almost startling height. I met her on the tram going around the lot at Sony-Columbia, and she told me she thought I looked like the young Louis B. Mayer. I can always tell when girls have mad crushes on me, and if one tells me I look like Louis B. Mayer, it's a super crush.

I met her today at Tiffany in Beverly Hills, right next to Rik Riklis's fine trattoria, Piazza Rodeo. She's a nice girl, but as she walked into Tiffany (I was buying a tiny present for my agent), she was hyperventilating.

"We've got to get out of here," she said. "Right away."

I told Scotty, the fine fellow who sells me bracelets and earrings, that I would come back. As C. and I hurtled along Rodeo, she did a tale unfold.

"I can't go to Tiffany," she said, "because of what happened back in Montgomery."

"What was that?"

"I had to sell my Tiffany pearls and my Tiffany silver," she said. "Can you imagine what it means to a Southern girl to sell her pearls? It was horrible. Now I can't go into Tiffany ever again. I thought you might know that."

We were almost at the Carnegie deli. I steered her inside and we took a seat.

"How would I possibly, conceivably know that?"

"You're Louis B. Mayer," she said. "You know everything."

We ordered. I ordered a sandwich and she ordered a salad, the sure sign of a nervous person who doesn't feel that she deserves to be fed.

"I had been a lawyer," she said. "Then I was in real estate, and I was selling development land, leasing office space, doing great. I figured I would be rich soon. I wanted a house. I wanted furniture. I wanted pearls. So I went to a bank that loaned to salespeople in my firm just on our signature, and I borrowed twenty-five thousand. Then I borrowed another twenty-five. Then I had to keep borrowing to pay the interest. Pretty soon I owed eighty thousand. Then the bottom fell out of the real estate market. Bang. Just gone. The deals on the books didn't close. The ones we had sold went into foreclosure. The phone didn't ring except with people wanting to sell, and there were no buyers."

She was becoming agitated as she spoke. Her eyes were like saucers with black rims around them, like raccoon eyes. I really felt sorry for her. Really sorry. Debt is misery.

"So there I was, owing all of that money and no way to repay it. One night I was so scared I had heart palpitations. My chest was heaving so much I had to have lidocaine rubbed into my chest muscles so they would lie still enough for me to have an EKG. Another time, they had to come and put me in an ambulance and give me a barium X-ray because my intestines had seizures. I was scared."

"How horrible," I said. I know about fears about money. They're not good. They usually come at about 5 a.m., along with the newspaper, and they don't feel like fun. If you've never had them, be happy. Many is the time I've greeted the songbirds in Malibu contemplating how many lifetimes it would take for my house to regain its value, or rather its cost, a very different number. I ate my corned beef and felt sympathy for C.

"I had to sell my pearls and my silver just to pay the interest," she said. "It was awful. But then I thought, maybe I'll make it all back in Hollywood. That's what I decided to do."

"But Hollywood is far more dicey than real estate," I said. "Planning on success here is like planning on winning the lottery."

"No," C. said. "I'm gonna make it. I know I am."

After lunch, C. told me she couldn't be seen with me on the street. "You're a known troublemaker," she said. "I'll never get a decent job if people think I know you."

That's what I like about C. She's not only realistic and practical, but she also has great manners. Still, she does have a mad crush on me, and that counts for something.

Friday

There is an hour you sometimes hit in West Hollywood that is perfect. I hit it today on my way to do a voice-over for a new potato chip that tastes like Caesar salad. It always reminds me of "the violet hour" that T. S. Eliot talks about. Only this is the blue-eyed hour.

It happens when you drive along Sunset or Santa Monica Boulevard and are next to one, then two, then a dozen cars with beautiful young girls with blue eyes, headed towards auditions or go-sees or photo-shoots. They are in Volkswagen Cabriolets or Toyota Tercels or Mercedes sedans, and they look perfect.

You are at Sunset in front of The Source vegetarian restaurant, and you see one of them next to you putting on eyeliner or maybe reading a script or maybe eating a carrot, or maybe just listening to some inner siren call of fame and riches. She's come here to be changed, to be made into something on the cover of a magazine, something that will make her mother finally yield in the inter-generational struggle, something that will make her immortal.

Every girl with a perfect nose and graceful eyebrows and a slender waist carries the field marshal's baton in her L'Oréal makeup kit.

And I, Tiresias, have seen it all before, and sometimes see them wind up working for Sally the Madame, sometimes see them married to heads of studios living in palaces on St. Pierre Road, sometimes see them marry policemen, sometimes see them go back to Mobile.

What can it be like for them to look at themselves in the mirror and see how great they look, what exemplars of man's evolutionary progress they are—and then to turn up at the audition and see two dozen just like them? To wake up thinking you are a miracle of God's love, and to find that you are a commodity like tungsten by three in the afternoon?

Never mind. They keep coming. They keep showing up at the appointed hour and pass by me as they apply their make-up.

Tuesday

Guess where I am. On Grafton Street. In Dublin, looking at the almost lewd statue of Molly Malone near the entrance to Trinity College. I got here this morning, slept most of the day, and now I'm taking my

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exercise by walking over to Trinity College, then down O'Connell Street to the Gresham Hotel where part of "The Dead," a famous story by, ummmh, ummmh, James Joyce, took place.

I love Dublin. I'm here to testify in a trial involving a big Drexel player with interests in Ireland. I probably shouldn't say more, except that my client is Dr. Eamon De Valera, the grandson of himself, and a walking font of great stories about Ireland.

The good things about Ireland are that it's always cool and never too hot, unlike glorious L.A., that there are always about ten thousand beautiful girls on Grafton Street, that smoked salmon seems to fly off the walls and land on my plate, and that no one brags about money.

The bad things are that, late at night, people get drunk and urinate against walls, that the waiters are almost unbelievably slow, and that Dublin is the most expensive city I've ever been in.

Wednesday

Last night my clients told me that I should appear at the courthouse, called The Four Courts, at 10 and be ready to testify at 11. I appeared there with my huge burden of SEC filings, met my side's barrister, an amiable fellow named Pat (of course), and headed down to an underground conference room. We walked (en route) through the massive, domed lobby, past knots of bewigged, berobed barristers talking cheerfully. In fact, I am not at all sure I have ever seen people who looked quite as happy anywhere in my life.

We went down one hall and another, past still more gloriously happy barristers, and then into the conference room. It was a strange sensation to be in a conference room with a man wearing a wig, talking about SEC filings, but I soon got used to it.

When the barrister left for an hour, a solicitor, a tall, lean fellow with a similarly happy look, kept me company.

"Why is everyone here so happy?" I asked. "I've been in a lot of courts, and I've never seen people look as happy as they do here."

"Maybe it's because they get paid between three and five thousand quid per day," he said. "That might have something to do with it."

"You're kidding," I gasped. "That's like five thousand dollars a day. Maybe more."

"I'm not kidding," he said. "They're a happy bunch here in Ireland, which is altogether a much happier country than you might have suspected."

Monopoly rent. The answer to so many of life's little problems.

I waited in that tiny room for several more hours, only to learn that I was not to be called at all. Other witnesses had taken longer than expected. Back I went to my grand hotel room to watch CNN and then local TV talking endlessly about legalizing prostitution. Hard to believe, but it's true.

In the evening, when the human engine waits, throbbing and hungering for smoked salmon, I ventured out my door, past the Bruxelles Bar, and down Grafton Street to find my nightly fix of the pink fish. I watched the kids frolic under the polar light of the

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longest day of the year. The boys are wearing T-shirts with pictures of Michael Jordan and Magic Johnson on them. On their feet are Reeboks and Nikes. The girls are wearing T-shirts with photos of Madonna and Marilyn Monroe. As you walk along towards the Liffey, you see The All-American Bar, Captain America's Restaurant, Starvin Marvin's Burgers and Shakes, Burger King, McDonald's, and Planet Malibu.

America is calling these young Europeans. America has reached them and gotten their number. The kids want to know how *Jurassic Park* was, whether it was really scary, when it is arriving in Dublin. They want to know what Matthew Broderick was like to work with, when *Dennis the Menace* is coming out, if it's true that Sharon Stone is gay.

In their Celtic heads, they are already subjects of America, clients of Hollywood, colonized in their spirits, even if they speak with such a thick Irish accent that I can barely understand them. Hollywood, Imperial City, has thrown its silken, fiber-optic, lush chains around them and the slaves themselves turn the key in the lock and swallow it.

Friday

An eventful day. I was supposed to testify today. In fact, I actually took the stand in an amazingly austere courtroom with a stunningly beautiful red-headed court stenographer. But the other side objected to their inability to study the documents from the SEC, so the judge dismissed me for two weeks.

I had dinner at the lovely St. Stephen's Green Club, which used to be the house of someone who leased it to Walter Scott, and that was long before anyone had ever heard of Ferris Bueller. My host was Dr. De Valera. He and his colleague talked about legalizing prostitution, about Irish history, about the times of the Troubles.

After dinner, Dr. De Valera and I walked for miles down past Trinity College to his train station. I can only compare walking with Eamon De Valera's grandson by Trinity College with what it might have been like to walk with George Washington's grandson (I guess he didn't really have one) along the banks of the Potomac near Georgetown in 1832.

Dr. D. talked to me endlessly about the killing of Michael Collins, an event that still makes certain Irish people see red and get very angry. He said it was probably an accident as Collins was getting ambushed by some other Irish faction. He seemed to have great affection for Collins, whom he had never met, of course, but who some say was a rival of his grandfather. It's all very complicated, but the Irish feel it in their bones.

We walked along the battery of Trinity College past bar after bar, all lit up, all filled with florid, madly drinking young people, choking with cigarette smoke, but amazingly happy-looking. People in Ireland just look damned happy. They know that man is a social animal. That's a lot to know.

Saturday

Here's how to make Ben Stein insane. First, and this is crucial, put him in the forward cabin of a transatlantic Aer Lingus flight, with no one next to him, with him having a great book, his Walkman, great stereo tapes, and a plate of smoked salmon. Second, wait until he has eaten some salmon, listened to *The Marriage of Figaro*, and is falling asleep. Third, get into the seat across the aisle from him with your incredibly homely wife. Fourth, take out a deck of cards and start to shuffle them as loudly as you can while you play gin rummy. In fact, between hands, shuffle them *ten times*.

I would rather that people on my flight were urinating against the bulkhead wall than shuffling cards. It makes me crazy. The noise is like stripping off your fingernails one by one. It's *horrible*.

I looked imploringly at the couple. I saw to my horror that they had Aer Lingus playing cards. That meant—as a stewardess confirmed—that the couple had actually been encouraged to torture me by playing cards. I gave up. I took my book back to the smoking section and hid there from the horrible noise. That's right. I would rather be back in smoking—but sans shuffling noise—than in healthy no-smoking with shuffling.

But wait. We're not through yet. Far from it.

Next, when the airplane lands in New York, have the cargo doors jammed shut so that I can't get my luggage to transfer to the American Airlines flight to Los Angeles.

Then, have it arranged that I left my tickets to Los Angeles on the seat I moved from when I cravenly hid from the card players instead of *murdering them* the way they deserved.

Then, when I get the tickets with seconds to spare, have a cab driver refuse to take me the quarter mile to the AA terminal unless I give him twenty bucks (which I did).

Then, when I get to the plane and slump into my seat, have me sit next to a former major player at Drexel who immediately starts to berate me about how I "ruined Michael's life."

Oh, where are those nice people who were playing gin rummy when I need them?

And then, and then . . . there at the gate is Mommy and Mr. Delicious Perfect looking like cherubs from on high, and everything is all right. In fact it's great until . . .

"You'll never guess what Little Perfect did this morning," Mommy said.

"What did you do?" I demanded, staring at Tommy.

"It was an accident," he said.

"He took out one of his goldfish and cut it in half with a carving knife and threw it back into the aquarium is what he did," Mommy said.

"You *what*?"

"I wanted to see if the other fish would eat him," Little Caligula said. "It was a 'speeriment."

"You are under arrest," I said. "That is an outrage. Did you learn that from watching the stunning violence of *Jurassic Park* [which he had watched while sitting on my lap for three solid hours]?" I asked.

"No, Daddy, I did it because that's what fishermen in Idaho do to catch fish," Tommy said.

"But that was your own little goldfish pet," I said. "Your friend."

"I know," he said. "I'm sorry."

While I considered what to do, he added, "Daddy, I really missed you while you were in Ireland."

Oh, you perfect ham. Just bite your lip a little while you feel my pain, and there's a slot for you in the White House around 2033, when Daddy is where Michael Collins is. ❐

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Rainbow Republican

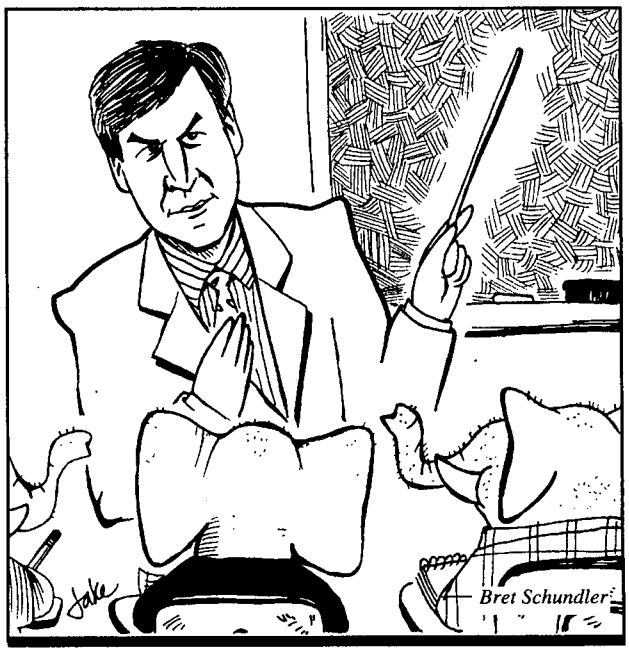
by Grover G. Norquist

Since Bill Clinton's election, the Republican Party has defeated two sitting Democratic senators, won twenty-five of thirty-nine state legislative races, and elected the first Republican mayor of Los Angeles since 1961. Clinton won 43 percent of the national vote, after campaigning as a "new Democrat," but he has since continued to campaign as a more expensive version of Mondale and a culturally more extreme Dukakis. These developments bring joy to the hearts of Republican strategists looking toward 1996, as they should. But the most heartening sign of the health and smarts of today's post-Bush Republican Party has been the swiftness with which party leaders have focused "like a laser" on the lessons presented by the election last May of 34-year-old Bret Schundler for a full term as mayor of Jersey City, New Jersey.

Governed by Democrats since 1917, this is the city where fabled boss Frank Hague (1917-1949) accurately announced "I am the law." Schundler won 68 percent of the vote in a city that defined big-city machine corruption, and where only 6 percent of voters are registered Republicans. Schundler's victory over the machine was complete—his entire slate of nine city councilmen was elected with him.

Schundler, a Republican only since 1991, was initially elected in a special election last November 3, after the conviction of the previous mayor on corruption charges. Against eighteen other candidates, Schundler won with 16 percent of the vote. He promised to cut his mayor's salary by $15,000 (25 percent), put more police on the streets, cut property taxes, expand the city's enterprise zone (where sales taxes are halved), push for vouchers for private and religious schools, and to root out endemic corruption.

His first act as mayor last fall was to reject the city council's proposed tax increase. Instead, he used his expertise as a former Wall Street financial manager to bundle the tax liens owed to the city and sell this highly collateralized asset to investors. This raised $44 million. The city payroll was cut by 200 staffers through attrition. The proportion of police walking a beat went from 32 percent to 64 percent. That increase came from moving cops from behind desks and eliminating such practices as having two police officers spend their day taking mail between police stations. Schundler has won a commitment from the Republican-dominated New Jersey legislature and from Republican gubernatorial candidate Christie Whitman to pass Jersey City–specific legislation to allow Jersey City to use some of the $6,600 in state aid per student as a voucher for private and religious schools.



While the defeat of a corrupt Democratic Party machine is noteworthy, it has gone largely unreported that Schundler carried more than 40 percent of the black vote, a stunning development for a Republican. Newt Gingrich and Jack Kemp have already debriefed Schundler—and Republican National Committee chairman Haley Barbour has invited Schundler to address the entire Republican National Committee—about the secret of his success with black and other minority voters. (Jersey City is 65-percent minority: 41 percent of its citizens are non-English speakers at home, 25 percent were born overseas, and 14 percent immigrated to America within the last ten years. Schundler won 75 percent of the Hispanic vote and 85 percent of the Asian vote.) If the Republican Party can find a way to win 40 percent of the black vote nationally, then the Democrats might as well stay home on election day. In fact, as was widely discussed in party circles at the time, the Republicans would have kept control of the Senate if they had won only 20 percent of the black vote in 1986.

Schundler is convinced that the black support he received was no fluke but a reflection of factors present in all machine-dominated cities. "I unequivocally think our campaign is a model for others," he says. "Ronald Reagan's mes-

Grover G. Norquist is president of Americans for Tax Reform.

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sage that 'government is not the solution, it is the problem' is self-evident to many voters stuck in corrupt cities. No one needs to tell the black voters of Jersey City that they shouldn't trust politicians with their lives and their money. Better than Milton Friedman or Hayek, they understand from first-hand experience over too many years that if you give politicians power they will take your tax dollars and give it to their friends. Why give them more?"

To their credit, Republicans from Washington to Los Angeles are asking Bret Schundler about his success in winning minority voters. How'd he pull it off? The Schundler campaign offers six lessons to Republican candidates:

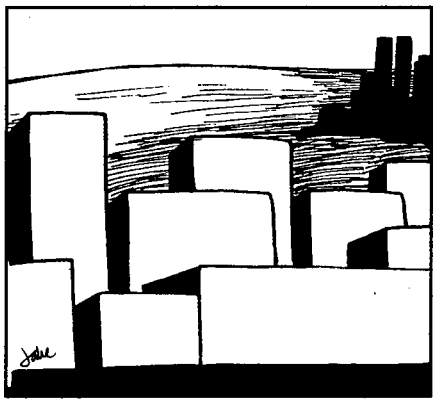
(1) To win the votes of black Americans you have to ask for them. Schundler spoke at black churches and campaigned heavily in predominantly black public housing projects such as Marion Gardens, where he received a majority of votes. Too often, traditional campaign consultants redline black districts, assuming there are no Republican votes to be had. Schundler argues that the failure of the liberal welfare state and its policy of entitlement has created a "time of great desperation" in cities and that Republicans can now compete in "historically hostile districts." As a result, Schundler says, "history is not a guide to the future."

(2) Speak directly to black voters—not through so-called black leaders. Not a single black elected official would endorse Schundler. The Democratic National Committee spent $35,000 to bring Jesse Jackson to town for a two-day attack on Schundler a week before the May election. But neither Jackson nor the local nomenklatura could deliver the black vote in Jersey City. "Jesse has been losing market share," Schundler observes. The Reverend R.L. Williams, Jersey City's deputy mayor, explains that Jackson's credibility has fallen sharply since 1985.

Jersey City voters, Williams explained, were "tired of the old leadership." Black "leaders" credentialed by liberal Democratic interest groups represent black voters about as authentically as Erich Honecker embodied the hopes and aspirations of the East German working class. Republican candidates can and must be their own Radio Liberty, speaking over, under, and around the establishment leaders to reach black voters.

(3) Expect to be called racist. Jesse Jackson went so far as to call a vote for Bret Schundler a vote for "the values of the Union of South Africa." But crying wolf wears thin over time.

Schundler would not allow Jackson's scare tactics to keep him from highlighting crime as a key issue. His demand that all criminals—even youthful offenders—receive some punishment proved very popular with black voters. So, too, his call for requiring prison inmates to work, not to mention welfare recipients. In countless races nationwide, conservatives have been intimidated by cries of racism into backing away from discussions of crime and welfare reform that would have won them serious support among black voters.



(4) Campaign on a unified message—not on separate messages that balkanize the electorate. Schundler campaigned in all neighborhoods in favor of his package of putting prisoners to work for their upkeep, welfare work requirements, lower taxes, more police patrols, and school vouchers.

The myth peddled by liberal Republicans for decades, that Republicans must shift left to win black votes can finally be put to rest. A Jersey City poll produced by Fabrizio, McLaughlin and Associates found that "black voters were every bit as concerned about fighting crime and drugs as white voters," and "black voters were *more likely* to support cutting the sales tax, school choice and requiring prison inmates to work in jail to pay their own cost."

A national study in June 1992 by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies found that 33 percent of blacks identify themselves as conservative, 30 percent as moderate, and 28 percent as liberal. Given that the study also found that only 8 percent of blacks identify themselves as Republicans, that 33-percent figure gives Republican candidates a huge target of opportunity. (Although he's heard from numerous conservatives, the victorious Schundler hasn't heard from the Ripon Society, that terminal moraine of liberal Republicanism. Ripon's repeated demand that the party move left to attract black votes now stands unmasked as a desire to promote liberalism, not black participation in the GOP.)

(5) As with all voters, establish confidence and trust with the black voter. Schundler didn't squander the window of opportunity open to him before the May runoff. Having promised last fall to oppose any tax hikes, cut property taxes, and increase the percentage of cops on the beat, he did all three well before the runoff. "Once I made it clear that I wouldn't raise taxes, it made everything else easier," Schundler says. In a climate of trust, Jesse Jackson's name-calling didn't stand a chance.

"Bush damaged himself and the Republican Party by undermining the trust voters had on the tax issue," Schundler notes. Moving left and flip-flopping on issues is especially damaging with black voters who are being introduced to Republican candidates for the first time.

(6) Commit to choice in education. Republicans sometimes forget how important this issue is to lower-income voters. Schundler calls its potential for "empowering black parents and communities as great as that of the civil rights movement of the 1960s." Because the Democratic Party remains controlled by the labor unions, Schundler adds, it "is trapped into being the institutional enemy of this inevitable revolution." He sees no end in opportunities for candidates campaigning on platforms of low taxes, seriousness about crime, and educational choice in cities across America.

Richard Nixon used the issues of crime and national defense to bring the Democratic Southern states solidly into the Republican fold. Schundler's success charts a strategy for Republican victories in the previous Democratic strongholds of the inner city. Success here would radically alter the correlation of forces in American politics, not only in urban areas, but in House and Senate races as well. ❐

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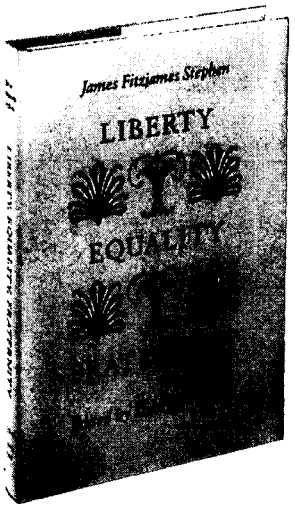

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You're All Right, Jacques!

by David Brooks

We are truly living in the age of Souter. It is an age in which Robert Bork can't get on the Supreme Court, but gray decencies such as David Souter and Anthony Kennedy pass in without a peep. It is an age in which the likes of Margaret Thatcher are brought low by decent John Major and his band of forgettable men. Now the flamboyant Jacques Attali has been ousted as president of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and the only thing we know about his successor is that you won't be able to remember anything about him five minutes after you read about his appointment.

The global finance ministers who engineered the ouster of Attali did so on the grounds that he was wasting money. He spent $1.1 million on a marble lobby for his bank, amidst other lavish expenditures. But if wasting money were grounds for dismissal, the World Bank building would be a windowless shell. The European governments that are keen to rein in Attali have just finished throwing hundreds of millions of dollars into serial HDTV technology, which, as George Gilder wrote years ago, was obsolete on the drawing board.

In reality, the anti-Attali push, and the obvious glee with which it was conducted, was an affair of personality, a triumph of grayness over flair. And we don't have so many outrageous personalities that we can spare the likes of Jacques Attali and still expect to wake up to an entertaining world.

But *le monde multilatéral* has a strict code of decorum, and Attali was too much the arriviste. The photographs he has distributed to the French press to publicize his current bestseller, *Verbatim*, capture much about the man. The book is supposed to consist of extracts from the sayings and judgments of François Mitterrand 1981-86, but Attali rarely strays far from autobiography. So the pictures depict Attali perched between Mitterrand and Thatcher, between Mitterrand and Gorbachev. Stuck in the middle of a lovely photo of Bush, Thatcher, and Mulroney at a G-7 summit is the beaming face of Jacques Attali. I now look for him in paintings of the Last Supper. Not without reason has he been called "God's Sherpa."

Attali was born in Algeria in 1943, the son of a then-poor Jewish perfume merchant. At the outbreak of the Algerian war he moved with his family to France, where Jacques's brainpower (and his father's growing wealth) gained him entry into elite French schools, including the Ecole National d'Administration, where a few dozen students a year are taught that they are brilliant and then sent off to run France.

"I want to act as a theoretician for politicians," Attali once said. "My model in America was Kissinger." Attali reportedly met François Mitterrand for the first time at a Paris disco in 1968, and began lecturing him about the effects of oil price fluctuations. When Mitterrand became president of France, he seems to have realized that he had come to power lacking a think tank (Reagan and Thatcher had theirs) and so hired Attali. Installed in the Elysée Palace in the office separating Mitterrand's office from the rest of the world (at a desk designed for Napoleon), Attali helped devise the 1981 Socialist economic plan that caused a massive capital flight from France and would have destroyed the French economy had not Mitterrand eventually jettisoned it. The plan instituted massive nationalization of banks and industry, protectionism, reflation, longer vacations for French workers, and so on. It was this sort of Socialist thinking that made Attali an odd choice ten years later to lead Eastern Europe out of socialism.

It is Attali's misfortune to have a face that is smug even at rest. It lacks much in the way of a chin, and his mouth, indented, falls naturally into a shape that suggests superciliousness. Like French foreign policy, Attali is ugly, yet vain. You miss the first five minutes of a conversation with him because you are so dazzled by how well dressed he is. He can be seen wherever the air is thick with consultation, with his matching Hermès tie and kerchief, his gold-plated Benjamin Franklin glasses, his subtle cuffs. One gets the impression he mousses each hair individually.

He is a pianist, a collector of antiques, a film-maker, an avid tennis player, a husband to a former model, and the father of two children, who are named Jérémie and Bethsabée. He is famous for accepting invitations to three dinner parties an evening in Paris, and showing up at each.

Though he rarely gets to bed before midnight, he rises at 4:00 so that he can write for three hours before heading off to work. He has published a history of the Warburg banking family, a meditation on "the political economy of music," and a daring novel entitled *The First Day After Me*—as if anybody could be interested in a world that no longer contains Jacques Attali. (The movie version is to star Gérard Depardieu.)

David Brooks is an editorial page editor at the Wall Street Journal Europe.

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In a recent book he sketched out his views of America: "The United States will find itself in a situation of being symbolically secondary. Already it can't sell anything to Japan but agricultural products. It will become Japan's granary, like Poland was for seventeenth-century Flanders."

In 1982 Attali wrote a history of time, in which he neglected to put quotation marks around the writings of other French philosophers. In *Verbatim*, he allegedly lifted passages of Mitterrand's wisdom from a forthcoming set of conversations with Elie Wiesel. Critics have not failed to notice his sloppiness; after a string of particularly bad books, *Le Monde* remarked that Attali isn't so much prolific as incontinent.

A French bureaucrat once said that during the Elysée Palace years, staffers used to scamper after Attali trying to chase down his ideas with great butterfly nets. One of his grander notions was a system of dams and dikes to stem the flooding in Bangladesh. Despite intense lobbying he couldn't persuade industrial countries to put up the billions of dollars required to build the project. The EBRD itself was another of Attali's schemes. Britain supported it because it would be located in London, and Mitterrand supported it because Attali did. Few other countries could figure out exactly what it was supposed to do.

Nor could Attali. There was talk that it would become Europe's central bank. Then he said it would be an organ to launch a new Marshall Plan. Then he boasted that it would become the world's largest merchant bank. "People will call me a megalomaniac," he reasoned, "but let me tell you my dream for this bank: to make it a kind of security council for Europe." One of the bank's first projects was to help fund the link-up between Czech airlines and Air France, which Mitterrand had appointed Attali's twin brother Bernard to head in 1988 (Bernard's first job in the airline business).

To staff the EBRD would be simple, Attali said. "I will just get hold of the lists of Nobel Laureates in economics and choose from them." He didn't get any laureates, but by dangling large salaries (and a diplomatic tax rate of 10 percent) he quickly filled 700 positions. Attali bought 600 Norman Foster–designed desks at $900 apiece. He spent $800,000 on private planes for himself and $400,000 on artwork. He provided nine restaurants. The kitchen and wine cellar of the bank acquired legendary status, as did the mini-skirted receptionists. The $60 million for the EBRD headquarters were supplied by Britain, causing the tabloid the *Sun* to editorialize, "The budget director of the bank is a Mr. Pissaloux. He is aptly named because that is what Europe keeps doing. All over the taxpayers."

On the world stage, Attali has been a wonderful presence. He is just about the only European political leader who has upbraided the European governments for their cruel treatment of the post-Communist nations. He has protested vigorously as the EC nations preserve trade barriers to the east. He was among the first to publicize opportunities in the Central Asian republics. He has dragged the Western nations into cleaning up the deadly Soviet power plants.

Attali is, in weird ways, just like the East European leaders he has to deal with. He is sloppy—he double-billed his expenses for a $10,000 flight to Tokyo. There is about him a whiff of corruption—he reportedly charged $30,000 of personal expenses on his EBRD credit card, including trips to racy night clubs. He is arrogant. His resignation was built around the sentence: "I know of no action that I have taken that in any way could be worthy of reproach." Yet if all public servants were as entertaining as Attali, I would happily pay my tax bill.

The fall of Attali is a tragedy not because he was doing a good job, but because it makes the world a duller place, and represents another triumph of technocracy over charisma. Attali was fired not because he was bad for Eastern Europe, but because he was bad for the smooth functioning of the EBRD bureaucracy.

The European Community has another program to aid the east, TACIS, whose directors are only quietly arrogant and who are never sloppy. Every regulatory *i* is dotted and every *t* is crossed. The program is regarded as a pathetic joke across the former Soviet Union and among Western officials. Much of its money goes, after rigorous bureaucratic controls, into the pockets of European consultants who are friendly with TACIS officials or into the miasma of the ex-Soviet public sector.

Attali is a difficult, daring, and remarkable jerk, the sort of nonstandard issue that exposes the myth that technocracies serve reason, not the individual. In an age in which only modesty is considered tasteful, Attali has set out to be a great man, to surround himself with great things, and to travel in great style. Though a socialist, he is a one-man rebellion against the egalitarianism of souls. Under Attali, the EBRD was vain, daring, overambitious, passionate, and disorganized. Under his successor, it will be rationalistic, meticulous, and irrelevant. ❐

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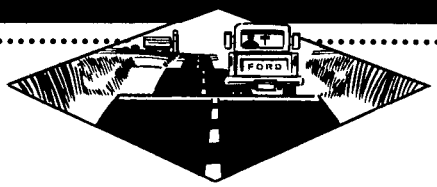

The ADL Defamed

by Arch Puddington

This year marks the eightieth anniversary of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, America's most distinguished civil rights organization. The ADL's principal mission, of course, is the defense of Jewish interests, an assignment that even its detractors agree has been carried out with admirable diligence and professionalism. Much of its credibility derives from the reports on extremism and prejudice it periodically issues. The ADL goes to extraordinary lengths to get its facts straight, and takes a straightforward, non-hysterical tone. Indeed, the ADL serves as the model for ethnic anti-discrimination projects; Arab-Americans, for example, have established a legal defense organization patterned on the ADL.

Yet the ADL today finds itself in crisis, its leadership accused of maintaining a nationwide intelligence network that has attempted to infiltrate and subvert extremist groups and legitimate political organizations alike. Though most Americans still identify the ADL as a resolute opponent of anti-Semitism and racial hatred, critics describe the organization as a "secret police agency" and speak of "the biggest domestic spy scandal in recent American history." Could the ADL, honored by presidents and paid tribute to by hundreds of victims of bigotry, be the same organization the *Village Voice* calls a "Jewish thought police"?

The ADL's difficulties stem from an investigation into the activities of Roy Bullock, a San Francisco art dealer who worked as a part-time investigator for the organization. Bullock, who is not Jewish, has worked for the ADL for nearly forty years, having volunteered his services as a young man out of personal revulsion over the Holocaust and a desire to subvert the Ku Klux Klan.

Bullock has infiltrated a number of hate organizations, and was credited with having helped bring to justice a man who was responsible for a string of synagogue bombings in the Bay Area. His abilities won the respect of law enforcement officials, and he established a working relationship with the local police, the FBI, and other agencies.

Bullock amassed impressive files from press accounts, meeting transcripts, and other public sources. Not all the files focused on anti-Semitic organizations; like any good reporter, Bullock believed that part of his job was to stay informed about the many and quite varied participants in Bay Area politics. He passed some of the file material along to the ADL's New York headquarters; the bulk was simply entered into Bullock's computer for possible future use.

The core of the "spy" case is this: Bullock is said to have received several cartons of material that had been the property of the San Francisco police. The files had belonged to a now-defunct investigative team, of which Bullock's friend Tom Gerard was a member. The case rests principally on whether Bullock violated California law to receive these files, but the legal complexities have become irrelevant in the current propaganda offensive. The San Francisco police and the prosecutor's office have fed the hysteria by handling the investigation like a drug probe. The police have released a 700-page dossier on the case, and there have been selective leaks to the media intimating that the ultimate targets are not Bullock and Gerard but higher-up officials of the national ADL.

All this has been seized upon by the lengthy list of political groups the ADL has managed to offend over the years. Organizations like the White Aryan Resistance have crowed over the ADL's troubles; they have been joined by a variety of more reasonable-sounding anti-Semitic publications, including one edited by Victor Marchetti, the ex–CIA agent who gained fleeting celebrity on the left some years back by writing a book that "unmasked" the intelligence agency.

But more serious have been the attacks from the left. A Bay Area weekly referred to the ADL as a "Zionist version of the CIA," while Michael Lerner, editor of *Tikkun* and Hillary Clinton's "politics of meaning" guru, accused the ADL of seeing "every liberal group as a potential threat to the Jewish people." Alexander Cockburn hinted that cooperation between the ADL and the Mossad might be involved. The ADL is also the subject of a class-action suit filed by former anti-war Congressman Pete McCloskey, an inveterate critic of both Israel and of what he views as Jewry's baleful influence over American foreign policy.

Little has been said about Bullock's having infiltrated neo-Nazis and skinheads, and it goes without saying that the ADL's critics never raised civil liberties objections when the targets were white supremacists or anti-Semites like Gerald L.K. Smith, not even when the ADL's investigations included infiltration or cooperation with police agencies.

To understand the seething disdain in which the left holds the organization, we must go back to the 1960s. The ADL was a stalwart organization in the original civil rights coalition. Its legal staff played an important role in landmark civil rights litigation, and its investigators helped expose and weaken white supremacists. Yet the ADL has obstinately stuck to what might be called a traditionalist definition of civil rights:

Arch Puddington works for Radio Free Europe–Radio Liberty in New York.

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equal opportunity, as opposed to equal outcomes. This implies treating with suspicion ideas like multiculturalism, diversity, and quotas. In recent years the ADL has supported lawsuits brought by whites claiming to be victims of discrimination. The ADL has also focused on black anti-Semitism, issuing reports condemning Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam, black newspapers that provide a forum for anti-Jewish bigotry, and black politicians and educators who rail against Jewish dollars, Jewish editors, or Jewish conspiracies.

The ADL's attitude is that, where the Jewish people are concerned, there are indeed enemies on the left. Some ADL leaders think that the anti-Semitism of the left ultimately poses a greater threat to Jews than the loud but generally ineffective chauvinism of the fringe right. The ADL has been quite explicit in condemning leftists who preach anti-Semitism, disseminate conspiracy theories about Zionist influence, or consort with those responsible for violence against Israelis, including Yasir Arafat.

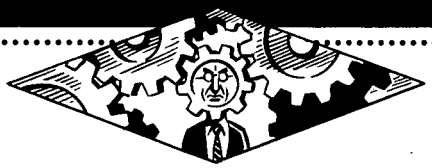
The issue goes well beyond the fact that anti-Semitism was the semi-official policy of many Communist regimes, and that East Germans, Soviets, and other Communist countries trained and funded the perpetrators of the anti-Israel terror. In America, anti-Israel and "anti-Zionist" prejudices were rampant in the New Left, and these attitudes, while somewhat muted, are still encountered and even accepted within progressive circles. Meanwhile, just as anti-Semitism became more tolerated on the left, anti-Jewish attitudes were diminishing among conservatives. Yet to some on the left, the ADL's refusal to oppose "Reaganism" while concentrating on the activities of American sympathizers with Arab terrorists signified that the organization had gone reactionary.

Attention has been focused on files maintained by Bullock in his personal computer that encompassed groups across the political spectrum. There is no evidence that Bullock did anything but maintain files gleaned from the press. Nevertheless, on the basis of those files, the ADL has been accused of "spying" on organizations like Greenpeace, the NAACP, and Peace Now.

Investigative journalists have produced no evidence of ADL violations of political ethics. When the *San Francisco Chronicle* claimed that "numerous sources" had charged the ADL with using intelligence information "to tar its ideological opponents," the examples listed in the article were hardly convincing: one would *expect* the ADL to maintain files on Noam Chomsky. Nor is it surprising that the ADL would have been interested in the "Los Angeles Eight," a group that faces deportation for alleged links to the PLO. A *Village Voice* writer seemed alarmed over unsupported charges that the ADL had monitored the comings-and-goings of representatives of Hamas, the fundamentalist group that has recently emerged as the Middle Eastern terrorist entity par excellence.

The real issue is whether it is legitimate for an organization dedicated to the defense of Jewish interests to investigate those who kill Jews as a matter of ideology. It speaks volumes about the real ideology of certain groups that claim to be working for minority rights that they are now assailing one of this country's bravest adversaries of prejudice and terror for doing its job too well. ❐

THE PUBLIC POLICY



Knifing NAFTA

by Marshall Breger

Although President Clinton is on record as supporting the North American Free Trade Agreement, his budget director Leon Panetta has declared NAFTA "dead—for now." The pact is about a hundred votes shy of passage in the House of Representatives, where members await guidance from constituents and the freshman class remains acutely sensitive to the wrath of Ross Perot and other anti-NAFTA forces.

The courts, too, have got into the act. In a ruling on a suit filed by three anti-NAFTA environmental and consumer-action groups (Public Citizen, the Sierra Club, and Friends of the Earth), Federal District Court Judge Charles Richey ordered the government in late June to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement on NAFTA. Even Laurence Tribe said that Richey's decision "blows my mind." Richey's heavy-handed intervention will be reviewed by the Court of Appeals on August 24, but if the decision is not overturned, the months that will be required for the EIS studies could put the final nail in the NAFTA coffin.

The AFL-CIO, frustrated by the flight of manufacturing jobs, has been a long-time opponent of NAFTA, even though estimates are that the free-trade agreement will create at least 170,000 jobs over the next five years. (Big Labor's problem is that it cannot be certain that they will be union jobs.)

But the labor unions alone cannot defeat NAFTA. Elite opinion generally supports free trade. And even liberal governors like Ann Richards of Texas and Jim Hunt of North Carolina have signed on. Why, then, does NAFTA teeter on the brink?

Two reasons. First, H. Ross Perot has thrown down the gauntlet, spending more than $5 million for a 30-minute infomercial raising the specter of a "giant sucking sound" of high-wage American jobs rushing southward to Mexico's low-wage environment. He has met with the House freshman class and threatened them with voter retribution if they support the treaty. He has challenged U.S. trade representative Mickey

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Kantor to a televised debate. Second, with a raft of intense anti-NAFTA constituencies, only vigorous presidential leadership can mobilize a national constituency in favor of free trade, and Clinton has been an irresolute defender of free trade.

During the presidential campaign, Clinton tried to have it both ways, coming out for NAFTA while stipulating that the concerns of labor and environmental groups must be met. But by the time Clinton took office the 2,000 plus–page treaty signed December 17 was fixed, and none of the countries involved—Canada, the U.S., and Mexico—was about to reopen the official text. The only play, therefore, was in the supplemental agreements designed to accompany the treaty to Congress.

In an October 4 campaign address at North Carolina State University, Clinton committed himself to graft social and environmental understandings onto what was previously understood to be solely a free-trade agreement. He proposed a trinational North American Commission on Labor Standards with "independent expert staffs and the authority to review complaints from citizens and nongovernmental organizations." This rhetorical flourish opened up possibilities for social engineering previously unimagined.

How would the Commission be structured and what would be its powers? At first, some NAFTA skeptics proposed a "kibitzing commission" that would hold hearings and issue reports. Still others favored a tripartite body where "business and environmentalists can sit at the same table as partners with government officials." Labor and green groups hoped to convert the Commission into a vehicle to enforce child labor and pollution standards throughout North America. And they want the Commission to be run U.N.-style—by an independent secretariat.

Under the guise of fighting to improve Mexican labor and environmental laws, the anti-NAFTA forces are pursuing a *domestic* agenda. Last May, at least seven environmental groups, including the National Resources Defense Fund and the National Wildlife Federation, announced they would support NAFTA—but at a price. They want NAFTA dispute-resolution panels to arbitrate environmental complaints and impose "pre-NAFTA tariffs" on environmentally incorrect goods. More recently, green groups have made creation of a massive "environmental assistance fund"—that is, a public slush fund for the use of environmental groups—a necessary condition for their support, however lukewarm.

The AFL-CIO, meanwhile, views a North American Labor Commission as the first step toward creating labor standards analogous to the European Community's "social charter." Such standards would help American labor unions achieve "co-determination" status on the German model—which gives unions a formal role in national labor policy and corporate decision-making. A revved-up trilateral labor commission could, for example, urge Mexico to adopt a 40-hour week and condemn the U.S. for allowing "striker replacement."

In its May negotiating draft the U.S. adopted many of the Green/Labor notions, recommending an Independent Commission Secretariat (a new international civil service with its own agenda) and the use of trade sanctions to ensure compliance with accords. Ever sensitive to intrusions on their sovereignty, Canada demurred and Mexico exploded. According to the Mexican newspaper *El Financiero Internacional*, Herminio Blanco, Mexico's chief NAFTA negotiator, walked away from the negotiating table.

Other recommendations in the U.S. proposal—including a party-initiated complaint process, data collection, and public hearings—should worry U.S. business plenty. Consider the public relations impact of an international organization issuing a report condemning the labor practices or the pollution in a particular industrial plant. This ploy, which the AFL-CIO tries continuously at ILO meetings in Geneva, may now become standard fare here at home.

The principal negotiators and their deputies continued to meet through June and July to bridge the gap over trade sanctions and determine whether to create an independent (i.e., politically unaccountable) trilateral secretariat. But Clinton's political calculations have made these endgame negotiations considerably more difficult. Instead of touting the economic virtues of free trade, his rhetoric increasingly reflects the social-engineering enthusiasms of the NAFTA opponents.

Mickey Kantor's approach to NAFTA negotiations typifies the Clinton team's confusion. First these people aimed their efforts at mollifying anti-NAFTA House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt and the greens, assuming that Big Labor would never sign on and that Republicans and business don't count in the calculus. Gephardt's price was some kind of sanctions. Thus Kantor conjured up sanctions language, figuring that he could sell it to free-traders (as well as Canada and Mexico) by pointing out that they were window-dressing only.

In congressional hearings, Kantor suggested that this country "manage" market forces by a supplemental agreement to limit "import surges." Put simply, such a clause would require that if free trade starts to work too well, he will call a halt to it in the affected industry. Then Kantor backed off once again—and proposed monitoring and consultation in the event of surges. As to trade sanctions, Kantor, after running up the flag, may again be backing off. In a meeting July 9-11 in Mexico City, the U.S. responded sympathetically to the Mexican view that trade sanctions imposed by a trilateral commission violate national sovereignty. Some insiders now believe that the U.S. will instead propose some form of fines to be assessed and collected by individual governments.

This backing and filling has brought NAFTA supporters to the edge of despair. The whole point of NAFTA was to eliminate tariff barriers to facilitate trade on both sides of the border. Yet liberal policy-makers still hope to accompany the treaty with all sorts of transaction taxes to support "border clean-up," "infrastructure improvement," etc. Early on, Xerox's Paul Allaire (Bill Clinton's favorite CEO) proposed a 2.5 percent "training tax" on U.S.-Mexico trade to pay for worker dislocation. Other suggestions before the Clinton National Economic Council include the creation of a "NAFTA Environmental Trust" within the International Development Bank, with $250 million in start-up capital and $9.75 billion in "callable" capital backed by the NAFTA countries. Other versions would create a North American Development Bank modeled on the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, set up to assist former East Bloc countries. This will be a recycled version of Clinton's stimulus package or—dare one say it—the anti-poverty grants of yore.

Arizona Congressman Jim Kolbe and other Republican free-traders have warned that they may jump ship if the supplemental agreements savage the basic

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text. Ultimately, however, if Mexico holds fast, free-trading congressmen and business groups will likely prefer half-a-NAFTA to none at all. It's the marginal supporters who may well decide that the final Clinton package is not the free trade agreement they originally supported and head for the tall grass.

NAFTA or no, Mexico is moving out of the Third World. Its economic integration with the United States will continue to advance even if NAFTA should stall. It is not only the economic but the political effects that should concern us. President Salinas has tied his political fortunes to the NAFTA mast. While his party, the PRI, will survive the 1994 Mexican elections, Salinas's ability to nominate a successor in his own image will be crippled without a free-trade boost.

Mexico will do what it must to get NAFTA, and Canada's NAFTA Implementation Act passed its senate in June, leaving the ball in Clinton's court. It is difficult to see how Clinton can walk away from NAFTA without suffering serious political defeat (and giving Ross Perot a scalp to wave). Political logic suggests that Clinton will engage after the signing (sometime this summer) of supplemental agreements that Clinton can sell as a "social charter" won for labor and green interests. Ironically, the fate of NAFTA now depends on Clinton's political will, and by waiting for the "side agreements" to be concluded before beginning its "sales campaign," the administration has let the NAFTA skeptics set the agenda.

Clinton continues to talk the rhetoric of free trade. However exaggerated the merits of the agreement he reached with the Japanese at the G-7 summit in July, he did trumpet it as a free-trade triumph. As this issue goes to press, the White House is rife with rumors that Bill Daley (brother of Chicago mayor Richard Daley, Jr.) will be appointed "NAFTA czar," supreme commander of the mother of all free-trade battles. At the end of the day, NAFTA may yet limp past the finish line.

Yet one wonders if Clinton's heart is in it. David Gergen, ever obsessed with "focus," may decide Clinton should bump free trade for health care as the project of the season. After all, the president has little political capital left to spend, and may husband it for a cause nearer and dearer to Hillary's heart. ❐

CLINTON'S AMERICAN SALOON

Will He Ever Return?

by Edward Norden

Summerland, California

"Yeah," the Native Son allowed. "Some people got all excited." He was sitting at the bar of the Nugget polishing off an espresso and sucking an unfiltered Lucky Strike, and his reference was to the visit that made this hang-out and the village it is in renowned. "UNOFFICIAL WESTERN WHITE HOUSE RETREAT"—such is the language on the cocktail napkins that Nugget owners Doug and Sally Taylor had run off without delay and continue to use. Of course there are also the for-sale T-shirts, the autographed photos on the wall, the unused saxophone. The historic visit was over Thanksgiving. Now Bill Clinton's first Independence Day as commander-in-chief was looming, and no one was really expecting him to keep his promise to return and kick back. Which was all right with the Native Son, because for him this vacation White House business was just a pain.

Espresso, it should be pointed out, is not the Native Son's beverage of choice, nor is the Nugget a coffeehouse. It's just that it has something for everyone and that he had a load of cucumbers to haul to L.A. in his 18-wheeler, for which trip he needed a clear head. Thirty-three years he's been driving this route, and in that time he's seen his birthplace and hometown change, and not for the better. Why, there was a time when people treated each other like family. Now with these newcomers coming in with their attitude and good taste, well, the Native Son could only shake his head.

The current president, not a bad guy you understand, hadn't gotten his vote. As for who he did vote for, we'll just let that ride, okay? The fact is that over Thanksgiving, he had felt like a prisoner in his own home, what with the mobs of Secret Service, Highway Patrol, media, tourists, gawking locals, and so on. The Native Son had two things to say before hitting the road. First, he wouldn't be unhappy if Bill and Hillary never came back. Second, Doug sure acted quick and smart—"those shirts are all over the world."

Beth, the assistant manager tending bar, was wearing one. "THE NUGGET FOR GOOD SAX AND BURGERS" it said. New Hampshire is where she is from originally, and indeed the clapboard houses of Summerland are enough to make a New Englander nostalgic. H.L. Williams founded the village as a spiritualist colony in 1889. Drive inland from the coast, with its greenhouses and fruit orchards where undocumented Mexicans earn many times what they'd get at home, and you can still turn up a few graying hippies in trailers. Summerland in this respect is like a bit of Northern California, or Oregon, transplanted to the heart of Reagan Country, for the great man's ranch is just over the mountains, and neighboring Santa Barbara and Montecito went for Ron in landslides.

Owners Doug and Sally, unrepentant Reaganites, thus felt and still feel at home. On any given evening, in addition to the tourist cars, you can see both old American pick-ups and new Mercedes parked in front of their place. This is because Doug and Sally's red meat and booze are consumed by, among others, the haves and retirees of Montecito, and because Summerland itself was, as the Native Son

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Edward Norden is a frequent contributor to The American Spectator *and* Commentary.

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complains, gentrified to a degree in the eighties. Antique shops are thick on the ground. If the host of "Death Valley Days" is up on the ranch he bought with his earnings thirty years ago, current Hollywood sluggers like Kevin Costner drove up land values when Reagan was president by grabbing homes on the beach side of Highway 101 and have been known to feed with the masses. Their occasional presence wouldn't have been enough to put Summerland and the Nugget on the cosmic map, however.

There are two busy rooms here, the smaller of which used to be a pool hall for bikers when Doug and Sally bought it in 1978 and which now features an open kitchen where the young Anglo and Latino employees function in what seems to be harmony. Only the Anglos, however, wear the T-shirts in question and wait on tables, weaving like running backs with armloads of Coors, burgers, T-bone steaks, or, if such is your pleasure, Calistoga and pasta.

The portions are liberal, the prices conservative. Youngsters on dates must show IDs to drink. Smoking is permitted in the main room, where ceiling fans spin and a truly noble moosehead does an impersonation of Charles de Gaulle between a photo of Willie Nelson with the owners and the displayed and still-virgin saxophone. The man for whom the instrument was bought had, on the eve of this holiday weekend, sent Tomahawk missiles into Baghdad, and his own chief of staff had declared that Harry Thomason's involvement in what the press was calling Travelgate was improper. Yet no one at the Nugget, or anywhere in the vicinity, suggested that the reason Bill Clinton wasn't showing up to unwind at Thomason's rented home on Padaro Lane again was that David Gergen might have advised him to keep daylight between himself and his culturally elite friends. A cheeseburger-loving trio of local Bubbas at a table under one of the fans were swapping loud and unprintable jokes about the president's wife, whom a framed photo at the door showed entering the Nugget laughing.

Yet an actual presidential party seemed, business-wise, unnecessary. The place was full tonight and a queue had formed outside.

Not the sort of scene that attracts Tim Moxley. The owner of Padaro Floral shop typically lunches at the Nugget and then drives home to his wife and two kids in Ventura County. Like the Native Son, Tim has to hand it to Doug and Sally. Unlike the Native Son, he readily states for whom he voted—Perot. If the man from Dallas could make and keep so much loot for himself, perhaps he could straighten out the nation's messed-up economy, above all by giving small businessmen like Tim a break.

Particularly sensible in Tim's eyes was Perot's opposition to the North American Free Trade Agreement. Now that Clinton seemed to have okayed it, and if and when NAFTA became a fact of life, Tim expected to be pressed even harder by growers south of the border, who pay their labor virtually nothing. But Tim isn't a bitter type—would a bitter type send his daughter to Bible Camp? He believes a president, any president, deserves a chance. He'd be

delighted if Clinton really made the Thomason/Bloodworth-Thomason home the Western White House, for this would give all the businesses in the area a shot in the arm, his own included. And he admires how the Nugget's owners are still riding the wave created by that one single visit.

Indeed, no one in Summerland appears to be nursing a furious sense of betrayal about Clinton, and no one who doesn't stand to profit from his return is impatient for it.

Bringing us to the enterprising couple, to Doug and Sally. They too are hardly ever at the Nugget, their gold mine, after dark, preferring to come in, go over the receipts, and trouble-shoot at midday. Success does not seem to have spoiled them at all. Told that to have bought a new red Corvette was shameless of her, Sally laughed and said that she deserved it, having put up for so many years with the humiliation of driving an old Porsche. Her husband, meanwhile, still drives an '87 GMC van.

On the radio of which he likes to catch Rush Limbaugh's show. No, Doug didn't happen to be tuned in when Limbaugh referred to "some guy in California who bought a sax and lured him in." But he heard about it, and under the circumstances it tickled him. For the happy Taylors have never voted anything but Republican and confess to having intimate ties to a certain ex-president's entourage. They would otherwise not have been able to hang, in the so-called "presidential booth," next to a photo of themselves with the Clintons, an autographed photo of Ron and Nancy taking it easy with Mikhail and Raisa up on the ranch.

It's with the Reagans' security detail that the Taylors have long been on close terms, the normally expressionless men in the dark glasses favoring the Nugget for relaxation. Long before 1980, however, Sally was friends with the previous owners of Rancho del Cielo, so that when she and Doug were invited to it by their Secret Service chums, she knew her way around. It was there, at a barbecue, that the Taylors met their real hero, whose motorcades in retirement pass the front door but who has yet to set foot in their restaurant-cum-saloon.

They admit taking flak from other Republicans due to all this hyping of a single enemy visit. In their own defense, they say a president is a president, and business is business. Part two of the Taylor defense plays well—there's no arguing with a 20 percent increase in profits since Thanksgiving, when CNN flashed the news around the planet. The power of the media! Doug never tires of showing off his scrapbook, frankly and happily recounting for the *n*th time how he bought the sax and had the napkins printed up as soon as he heard that the Clintons' good friends were having them over, how the president-elect and his wife showed up, how the sax was offered but not played, how after the visit the Dom Perignon was broken out.

Just as frankly, if not so happily, he worries that if the First Lady's health reform package goes through, small businessmen like himself will have to buy coverage for all their employees, young and not-so-young, citizens and aliens. Doug and Sally like Dole in '96. But they're not dogmatic. Anybody the Republicans nominate, they'll vote for. ❐

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Prophet Sharing

by Cathy Young

In June, the members of Russia's Fourth Estate were called upon once again to defend freedom of the press. Under a plan to partially privatize the Ostankino State Broadcasting Company, the Committee on State Property allowed RTV Press television, headed by former *Moscow News* editor Yegor Yakovlev, to purchase some of Ostankino's facilities and equipment. This did not sit well with state broadcasting chief Viktor Bragin, who had his own privatization plan all worked out; an arbitration court ruled in favor of the state broadcasting company, and police were dispatched to seal off the studio's premises. Considering that Yakovlev, who also publishes the weekly *Obshchaya Gazeta* [The Common Paper], has been critical of Yeltsin, this had the look of state-orchestrated harassment.

Yet the rally organized by the Journalists' Union in solidarity with Yakovlev drew numerous Yeltsinites in and out of official posts, and other VIPs. According to a report in the *Independent Gazette* (June 17), "The demonstrators noted that this was not just an isolated incident but part of a disturbing trend." Yakovlev, lavishly praised as a pioneer of glasnost, summed up the conflict thus: "Most of the media that brought the current regime to power have become the loyal press of this regime and cannot stand up to it. But if we stand together, we can create a small island of resistance." Shortly afterwards, Russia's highest arbitration court ruled in favor of RTV Press, or rather of the State Property Committee; resistance and persecution of the independent press in Russia aren't what they used to be.

Still, Yakovlev has a point. For instance, little as one may like Gen. Alexander Rutskoi, fighter-pilot-turned-populist politician, one detects an unpleasant whiff of toadyism in the way Yeltsin's insubordinate veep is being whacked by the press. Vice President wantonly abused by liberal media . . . where have we heard that before? In an uncanny parallel, the journalists are especially fond of picking on Rutskoi's infelicitous way with words, e.g., "I'm from the Kursk region myself, and everyone knows that isn't some kind of Zulu country," or the complaint that Russia's criminal laws "look like they've been written either by gynecologists or by vegetable growers."

More seriously, the press and some deputies have questioned the financing of the veep's new country home, with a four-car garage, a swimming pool, a sauna, and other non-populist amenities. According to the July 4 edition of *Moscow News*, the bank where Rutskoi expects to get a home-building loan is controlled by a fund for which he had obtained regulatory and licensing breaks.

While Rutskoi's post may be abolished by Russia's proposed new constitution, he has already announced his intention to run for president. Other declared candidates include economist Grigory Yavlinsky, presidential adviser Sergei Shakhrai, irrepressible Mussolini wannabe Vladimir Zhirinovsky (see *TAS*, February 1992), and a newcomer to Russian politics though not to Russian TV: healer Anatoly Kashpirovsky. In the late 1980s, Kashpirovsky claimed to be able to put patients in so beatific a state that they could undergo surgery without anesthesia and not feel pain; maybe he plans something similar for the economy.

Still, the alternately boorish and clownish Kashpirovsky has his faithful, including former skeptics who tell of warts or sores miraculously gone after they dozed off in front of the TV while the great man held a seance. Of course, fascination with the supernatural and the extrasensory has been a growing craze in post-Communist Russia, weirdly coexisting—often in the same people—with renewed interest in traditional religion. (A recent poll showed that 82 percent of Russians celebrated Easter this year while only half celebrated May Day.)

Moscow News writes about an interesting group calling itself the White Brotherhood, which mixes elements of traditional Russian Orthodoxy, apocalyptic Christianity, Krishna worship, and yoga. The theory is that in preparation for Judgment Day, a new messiah has descended on earth in the company of a "white brotherhood" of 144,000 saints who live among men and women, sometimes not even knowing that they are saints. The messiah is female—her full title is Mother of the World Mary Devi Christ, Messiah and Savior—and it seems that until the collapse of Communism, she herself either did not know of her divine nature or kept it carefully closeted, in her capacity as Komsomol functionary Marina Tsvigun. Mother Mary Devi, a beauty in her early thirties, founded the group in the summer of 1990 in Kiev together with her husband, John the Swami/Elijah the Prophet, or, in his secular incarnation, Yuri Krivonosov, holder of a graduate degree in the technical sciences. Who says Russians lack the initiative to carve out new careers in the dog-eat-dog world of the market?

According to the White Brothers, the world will end on November 24; all the converted are to sever their worldly ties and go out to urge others to repent, since

Cathy Young, our regular Russian Presswatch columnist, is writing a book on feminism.

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on Judgment Day all those who have not repented and believed in Mary Devi will be destroyed. This event will be preceded by a massacre of the White Brothers; a young woman preacher handing out leaflets with Mother Mary's picture (in white robes, wearing a cross and holding something like an Egyptian magic staff) outside a Moscow movie house resolutely told *Moscow News* reporter Svetlana Kolosovskaya, "She'll be crucified by late November!" Actually, 12,000 White Brothers were supposed to have been slaughtered by this summer, according to one of their earlier pamphlets. So far, however, they have not even had any legal trouble, despite sending their preachers to proselytize in some small-town high schools.

In the meantime, the Russian Supreme Soviet has passed a law, yet to be signed by Yeltsin, cracking down on a far more dangerous influence: foreign missionaries and preachers, who will be required to have an invitation from a Russian-based organization or "accreditation" by the state before they can engage in any activities in Russia. The measure is rumored to have been prompted by a complaint from Patriarch Alexei II, reportedly upset by the Rev. Billy Graham's ability to fill a stadium in Moscow. However, *Moscow News* discloses that while the Russian Orthodox Church pushed for the restrictive law, the initial request came (in an April 20 meeting of heads of religious denominations with President Yeltsin) from the leader of the Russian Baptist community, Viktor Longvinenko.

Other supporters of the ban care little for the distinction between bad foreign preachers and their domestic counterparts: in the following issue of *Megapolis Express*, one Alexander Nechayev (himself a clairvoyant, which isn't very Orthodox) opined that all Protestant churches were in league with the devil. The bizarre axe murders of three monks in Optina Pustyn near Moscow by a monastery worker fired for drunkenness, who had carved "666" into the axe handle, prompted further talk about possibly Satanic exotic cults. Father Dmitry Dudko, a priest persecuted by the KGB in the late 1970s who has more recently concluded that Communism was actually good for religion because it kept away consumerist seductions, wrote in the ultranationalist weekly *Den* (Day), "Democracy means the refusal to combat evil, therefore democrats give equal freedom to all sects, even Satanic ones; hence they are oppressors of all that is good."

Those on the side of the good include the notorious émigré writer Eduard Limonov (see *TAS*, September 1992), who now lives mostly in Moscow but admits to *Komsomolskaya Pravda* (June 23) that he still makes most of his money in Paris. He also says he really hates Moscow, which is "too complacent" and too infested with "rotten people and profiteers" from all over the ex-USSR: "Moscow isn't a Russian city anymore. It ought to be shut down and sprayed with DDT for a long time." Not that life in Moscow doesn't have its rewards: Limonov's novel *It's Me, Eddie*, chronicling the author's bisexual adventures in New York, has sold over a million copies in Russia, and Limonov claims that he now deliberately tries to dress down to avoid crazed fans (young men and "huge numbers of middle-aged women"). Modern Western society, Eddie says, is "like a mental ward where the patients are treated rather well but shot full of various tranquilizers."

Alexander Rutskoi

In this view of the West, Limonov may find a near-ally in Lev Navrozov, another ex-Soviet citizen previously discussed in this space (October 1992). In an essay in the June *Ogonyok*, "Hitler and Freud: The Conflict of Cultures" (which seems to suggest that Hitler's hatred for Jews was really the fault of Freud, who sullied the most sacred provincial middle-class values such as childhood and motherhood with sexual associations), Navrozov analyzes the Islamic world's fight for "purity" against the "filth" spread by the "formerly Christian" West on an unmistakably sympathetic note. Is he, then, taking up the defense of the common man against the cultural elite? Not quite.

In a remarkable essay in the January 3, 1993 issue of *Moscow News*, Navrozov compares George Orwell's *1984* to the earlier dystopian novel by Yevgeny Zamyatin, *We*, classifying the former as mass-market trash. *We*, says Navrozov, is about the individual's rebellion against the conformist rationality of his technologically advanced society, about the freedom to proclaim that two times two does not equal four. To Orwell, on the other hand, "tyranny deprives about 99 percent of the population of pleasures . . . which 99 percent of the Western population legitimately enjoy in 1949 [and] does not allow the population to believe what [most] regard as truth and reality, i.e., that 2 x 2 = 4." (Has Navrozov actually read Orwell? Winston Smith is not made to say that two times two is not four, but that the four fingers his torturer holds up are five.) Thus, to Orwell, "freedom means the conformism of the happy 99 percent of the population." The West can be bad either because it subverts traditional social values or because it imposes social conformism—as long as it's bad.

It gets curiouser and curiouser, as Orwell is jeered for pandering to the public perception of "Stalin as a new Hitler" and "mobilizing the masses to repel the new Hitler's (imagined) assault on the West." This, from the man who, as late as 1991, was still warning the West of the Soviets' relentless drive for a global takeover. Perhaps the former chairman of the Committee for the Salvation of Western Democracies is wondering in retrospect whether the democracies were worth saving after all. ❐

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The World of Caryn James

by James Bowman

My favorite politically correct critic and commentator on film, Caryn James of *The New York Times*, had a bad moment recently. In writing about a film she otherwise loved, Sally Potter's *Orlando*—the story of an epicene English nobleman of the sixteenth century surviving without aging into the twentieth and changing sex along the way, sometime in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth—Ms. James avers that "the idea behind Orlando's gender change—that men are the warmongers and women the peacemakers—seems dangerously close to traditional stereotypes."

I'm not quite sure what the import of "dangerously" is, but the suggestion seems to be that even the merest hint of a representation of men making war (who ever heard of such a thing?) and women not liking it could be enough completely to vitiate even *Orlando*, which is so assiduous an attempt to efface the true image and deny the real function of sex through the ages as to constitute an act of historical vandalism. Ms. Potter, like the graffiti artist who pencils in a moustache on the Mona Lisa, seems to be pleased with her own wit in suggesting the possibility of sexual ambiguity behind the icons of the past.

Thus she has that old queen and author of *The Naked Civil Servant*, Quentin Crisp, playing another old Queen, Elizabeth I, while Orlando, the young boy that he/she takes a fancy to, is played by Tilda Swinton, a woman. Just as Orlando defies the most basic of historical realities, time, by not growing old or dying, so he/she mocks the most basic of biological realities by changing sex. When, at length (at great length), Orlando is transformed into a woman, she turns to the camera and pronounces the progressivist credo in as succinct a form as we are ever likely to have it: "Same person, no difference at all; just a different sex."

Clearly, Caryn James got so far into the spirit of the thing that even such a vestige of historical fact as a depiction of men making war seemed to her "dangerously" close to stereotype. She might as well object that in the sumptuously photographed Elizabethan settings the men wear doublets and hose and the women wear dresses. Another lady critic, Rita Kempley of the *Washington Post*, takes a similar line when she compares the recent re-release of *Snow White* with a new kids' film, an unspeakably rubbishy (even by latter-day Disney standards) piece of witch-mongering called *Hocus Pocus*, and finds the latter worthy of commendation because "at least the female characters are riding their brooms instead of sweeping up after dwarves."

The unspoken assumption of such critics is that the purpose of the cinematic as of the other arts is to promote the progressivist fantasy of a world in which men do not make war but women may—though they may not sweep up. It is a world that has never existed but they believe it can be brought into existence if only artists are conscientious enough about avoiding sexist "stereotypes." Thus are films judged according to their effectiveness as propaganda for the feminist utopia, while the judges pretend that their concern is really with the freshness of the image. Truth to historical fact becomes just another way to be unoriginal. The politically less convenient of the movies' repertory of archetypal images are reduced to stereotypes.

But the feminist vision is certainly as freighted with stereotypes as the one it opposes (what should we call it? the masculinist?). Look how common are such characters as the one played by Rene Russo in Clint Eastwood's *In the Line of Fire*. She is a tough Secret Service agent, cover-girl beautiful but every bit as deadly as her male colleagues, whose purpose in the film is to remind Clint that things have changed since the sexist days of John F. Kennedy, whose memory he reveres, and then to serve as his love-interest in reward for learning that lesson. Both the drop-dead beautiful killer and the hard-bitten, tight-lipped melancholy Man Alone played here by Clint are common figures in the movies these days, but nobody bothers to identify *them* as stereotypes.

At least not when such dialogue takes place between them as this: Asking her about her love life, Eastwood guesses that she has ended a relationship because "you swore you'd never again let a man come between you and your career." Then he suggests his own suitability as a mate for her by telling her that he "swore I'd never again let my career come between me and a woman." This bit sent dear little Caryn James into an ecstasy of admiration: Eastwood turns "convincingly into a sensitive guy" and thus becomes "a shrewd combination of the familiar, invincible Clint and a new, vulnerable man for the 90s." Also, she thinks he's a hunk. It's all enough to make this, in her view, "the best commercial movie of the summer so far." Interestingly, Bill Clinton liked it too.

But by any standard of what constitutes "the best" other than the presence of sensitive guys and careerist gals this is unlikely to be true. John Malkovich as a deranged ex-CIA agent who is very cross because his country has taught him to kill (who *else* would you expect to try to murder the president?) is just too unbelievable a character, and Frank Horrigan, the "sensitive" Secret Service man played by Eastwood, is a little too boringly familiar. I for one am far from convinced that

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Frank is in any important respect different from Dirty Harry or the Man with No Name or William Munny of *Unforgiven* or any other of the clones of the character Eastwood has played throughout his career. He's just been given a bit of feminist-inspired dialogue to spout. And he doesn't mind spouting it precisely because he knows that the underlying character remains substantially undisturbed.

Hollywood, of course, would be unthinkable without such stock characters, which are usually identified with particular actors. If it didn't matter that the Clint-clone should be recognizable to a popular audience, they might as well have cast Jerry Lewis as Dirty Harry. Such a character is not a stereotype, which is boringly predictable, but an archetype, which is interestingly predictable. Most of the best Hollywood films derive their power over their audiences by making the familiar seem archetypal and the archetypal seem familiar. The Clint Eastwood character in *In the Line of Fire* still has that archetypal quality, but it shows signs of wearing thin. And that makes him a tempting target for those who want to replace the old archetypes with the new stereotypes.

Interestingly, something similar happened to *The Last Action Hero*.The archetypal action hero played by Arnold Schwarzenegger, having become a little too familiar, is here exposed as a fake, a merely celluloid creation in a celluloid world where bombs and bullets create a visual phantasmagoria but are always ultimately powerless when directed at the hero. When the celluloid hero supposedly enters the real world and finds that real bombs and bullets are less selective in their effects, it is meant to be a revelation both to him and to the action-sated audience. It is not. In the end, the demands of the genre are stronger than the urge to debunk it, and Arnold, though he takes a bullet in a non-vital place, is essentially the hero of old. The fake itself proves to be fake.

This is too confusing, and audiences have understandably shunned the thing. In the meantime they have been flocking to movies like *Sleepless in Seattle* and *The Firm*, which reaffirm the standard tropes of the Hollywood culture. *Sleepless* is particularly interesting because, unlike *The Last Action Hero*, its self-consciousness about being cinematic is entirely un-ironic. "You don't want to be in love," says one character to another; "you want to be in love in a movie." Yet, in the end, the film invites us to reply: well, why not? And, indeed, someone in a movie who wants to be in love in a movie would seem to be in the right place to realize her ambition. The Cary Grant/Deborah Kerr film, *An Affair to Remember*, which is the acknowledged prototype for *Sleepless in Seattle*, is thus reprised by it—with the nasty accident cut out and a cute kid thrown in—and the audience's will to believe in the celluloid world is simply reinforced without first being called into question, as in *The Last Action Hero*.

Neither does *The Firm* break any new ground. Hal Holbrook has played the corrupt grandee as often as Clint Eastwood has played Dirty Harry, and Paul Sorvino's arrival late in the film as a Mafia *capo* was greeted by the audience on the night I saw it with a delight-

ed sigh of recognition. Then there is the bumbling but likable ex-con private eye and his ditzy secretary. We've seen and loved them all before. Meanwhile, Tom Cruise is busy playing Tom Cruise: the wise-ass who has to be taught a lesson but who takes the lesson to his heart of gold and defeats the forces of corruption, injustice, and reaction.

All the right archetypal figures are in place, so it doesn't seem to matter to audiences that the premise of the plot—that a firm of high-powered lawyers would be stupid enough (1) to involve themselves in criminal activity in cahoots with their Mafia clients, (2) to murder members of the firm who discover the truth and try to bail out, (3) to get caught on account of a transparent scheme of overbilling virtually all their clients, and (4) finally to be outsmarted, *en masse*, by little Tom Cruise—is ridiculous. The point is that these real world difficulties are swallowed by the enthusiastic audiences—along with yet another depiction of our federal government's law enforcement agencies as sly and brutal and duplicitous—because they are ultimately irrelevant to the play of archetypes that the audience has come to see.

Thus does film criticism in America tend to spill over into cultural criticism, *à la* Caryn James: you end up criticizing—or praising—the archetypes rather than the film itself, and it becomes a matter of political rectitude to defend your side's archetypes against the other side's. As yet this is not quite so true in Europe, which is one reason why I turn so often, as I do again this month, to a European film as Movie of the Month. *House of Angels* is a Swedish film by a British director, Colin Nutley, who creates stereotypes in order to subvert them. A beautiful young woman who has been living in Berlin returns to a little Swedish village to claim an inheritance and scandalizes the villagers with her city ways. They have to learn that she is not so very much worse than they are after all; and that the respectable appearances that they set so much store by can hide some pretty nasty behavior.

It is not a very original theme or story, and the twist in the plot at the end you can see coming a mile off, but it is told with so much narrative and cinematic originality and inventiveness that the treatment echoes the theme: that characters and situations that may on the surface suggest stereotypes have to be looked at again when you look closely, or from a different angle. The result is funny and tender, humorous and heart-warming. Nothing is quite as it appears at first—or even at second—yet everything is as familiar as a stereotype. This, I take it, is the sign of first-class artistic achievement—this and the fact that no political faction has bought a stake in it. The nearer your characters get to looking like real people, the less suitable you are likely to find them as propaganda weapons. Maybe this is what Caryn James meant by the "dangerous" stereotypes: the ones that look too much like the truth. ❐

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PHILIP LARKIN: A WRITER'S LIFE

Andrew Motion

Farrar, Straus & Giroux / 570 pages / $35

reviewed by ROBERT RICHMAN

Andrew Motion met Philip Larkin, the greatest of postwar English poets, in 1977, the year Motion went to teach at the University of Hull, where Larkin had been librarian. Motion had defended Larkin's verse in numerous essays, a book, and in a 1982 memoir, "On the Plain of Holderness," in which he said of Larkin: "He's certainly helped me more than anyone else to clarify the kind of poetry I want to write, and been marvellous company—often profound, and sometimes extremely funny."

Motion, who was named one of the executors of Larkin's estate, also wrote a poignant poem for the *Times Literary Supplement* in the days following Larkin's death of esophageal cancer in December 1985. The poem was important because Larkin's amusing side can be found almost everywhere in it. Furthermore, it repudiated a caricature popular among the free-verse dogmatists and the chic radicals who have been governing English cultural life since the 1960s: that Larkin was a bitter misogynist and child-hater who cared for nothing except himself and his work. It comes as a shock, then, to find Larkin's former friend retracting in his new biography many revisionist claims he spent the better part of a decade formulating.

Granted, even politically incorrect readers of *Philip Larkin: A Writer's Life* and *The Selected Letters of Philip Larkin, 1940-1985*[1] may be surprised by Larkin's occasional private deriding of blacks, immigrants, Jews, and women. In one letter Larkin includes mock policy recommendations in a poem:

> *Prison for Strikers,*
> *Bring back the cat,*
> *Kick out the niggers,*
> *How about that?*

And in a 1946 letter to Kingsley Amis, whom Larkin often tried to outdo in epistolary outrageousness, he writes:

> Don't you think it's ABSOLUTELY SHAMEFUL that men have to pay for women without BEING ALLOWED TO SHAG the woman afterwards AS A MATTER OF COURSE? I do: simply DISGUSTING. It makes me ANGRY. Everything about the ree-lay-shun-ship between men and women makes me ANGRY . . . It's all a f---ing balls up. It might have been planned by the army, or the Ministry of Food.

But Larkin's sporadic lapses of taste, which have renewed the cries for his head in the literary world, are nothing compared to Motion's distortions and deceptions, his blatant lack of balance, his determination to give as little weight as possible to people and events that might cast Larkin in a better light.

Philip Larkin was born in Coventry in 1922, the second child of Eva and Sydney Larkin. Sydney, the Treasurer of Coventry, was, Motion claims, "autocratic" and given to "extreme political views."

Motion holds that Sydney was a Nazi sympathizer during the 1930s. (His documentation: one essay by Noel Hughes, from which Hughes retracted the assertion, and another essay by John Kenyon—which, Motion tells us in a footnote, is unpublished and in his sole possession.)

Sydney certainly valued the intellect. His home was filled with books, and Sydney impressed on his son that reading should be an autonomous activity divorced from school. Eva, for her part, was, in Motion's words, "mousy," "whining," and "scared almost into hysterics by thunderstorms." Their marriage was "bloody hell," Philip himself said, and instilled in him permanent doubts about the institution.

A sister, Kittie, was eight years older than Philip, so he grew up feeling like an only child. His eyes were weak, he was ungainly, and at age four he developed a stammer that wasn't cured until he was an adult. His parents bequeathed to him their own diffidence and social awkwardness. "You don't know what shyness is," Sydney once said "very crushingly" (Larkin's words) to his son when he complained about his own. The result was few friends for Philip, and no friends at all of the opposite sex.

Larkin was exempted from war service because of bad eyes, and attended Oxford from 1940 to 1944. His troubles with girls continued, but one male friend he met remained close for life: Kingsley Amis, the novelist and poet, whose *Lucky Jim* is dedicated to Larkin. Amis, whose father was an export clerk for Colman's Mustard, shared Larkin's love of jazz, and both men hated public school boys and all forms of social pretension. (Larkin later distanced himself from the Symbolist-styled poems that appeared in his first collection, *The North Ship* (1945), but never tried to disown the two fine novels he published fresh from school and in amazingly quick succession: *Jill* (1946) and *A Girl in Winter* (1947). The former had as its subject the very social dislocation he had felt at Oxford.)

Larkin's reputation grew slowly, with four volumes of poetry coming out roughly one a decade. *The Less Deceived* (1955) got a slew of favorable reviews, and orders inundated the Marvell Press, the tiny husband-and-wife outfit that had published the book. (Weeks after signing his contract, an editor at Faber & Faber—T. S. Eliot's house and the pinnacle of British poetry publishing—asked Larkin if he had a manuscript to consider. Larkin told him he was too late.) *The Whitsun Weddings* (1964), in Motion's words, "did

[1] The *Letters*, edited by Anthony Thwaite, have appeared in England, and will be published in the U.S. later this year by Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

Robert Richman is poetry editor of the New Criterion.

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more than confirm Larkin's reputation; it turned his voice into one of the means by which his country recognized itself." *High Windows* (1974), Larkin's last book of his own poems, sold 18,000 copies—a feat given the anti-formalist esthetic climate of the time—and made Larkin "a national monument."

Larkin graduated with a First, but his stammer made teaching impossible. He was also rejected by the Civil Service. Motion doesn't speculate why, but Larkin's social standing may have had something to do with it. Larkin landed a library job in Shropshire where he did everything from stoke the boiler to serve the children. In an interview, Larkin later said about this job, in a broad Yorkshire accent for effect, "I'm fond of saying, '*I started at the bottom.*'" It was here that Larkin finally met a girl who would sleep with him: Ruth Bowman.

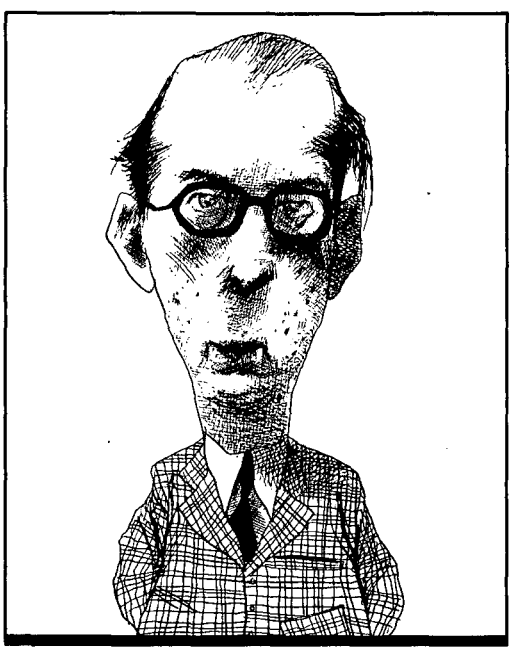
In 1948, on the heels of his father's death, Larkin got engaged to Ruth, "making it clear," as Motion writes, "that marriage would not automatically follow." Larkin told a friend that he proposed because he didn't want to "desert the only girl I have met who doesn't instantly frighten me away." In the months to come, Motion writes, Larkin "slowly but surely . . . crushed Ruth's happiness beneath his own worries." Finally Larkin made an offer of marriage, only to withdraw it. Ruth returned the ring and refused to see him.

As a librarian at Leicester University, Larkin met Monica Jones, a teacher of English. The independent-minded Jones, who would become the poet's closest friend, claimed to have no interest in marriage. Nor did she mind the distance between her and Larkin after he took a series of jobs in remote areas, beginning in 1950 at the library of Queen's University in Belfast. "She suited his selfishness in virtually every respect," Motion writes. From this point on, in fact, and until Jones moved in with Larkin in 1982, they saw each other only on weekends and holidays. "I wasn't much trouble," Jones says, "and then I'd go and cook the supper."

At Belfast, Larkin had the best writing conditions of his life, working every weekday evening from 8 to 10 p.m., then going out for drinks and cards until 1 or 2 a.m. Four years later, when he was about to take a new job at the University of Hull, he told Robert Conquest: "I feel terribly regretful at leaving Belfast."

Larkin's first impression of Hull, written on a postcard to his mother, was dour: "It's a bit chilly here and smells of fish." Situated at the junction of the Hull and Humber rivers, Hull not only reeked of fish, but was less interesting and less attractive than Belfast, and even more remote: "on the way to nowhere," as Larkin wrote. But for someone who was fast becoming the laureate of the dismal side of England, Hull was perfect. He stayed until his death thirty years later.

At Hull, Larkin started to see Maeve Brennan, a co-worker at the library. Motion is tough on Larkin about this "affair," and its supposedly calamitous emotional impact on Monica, but his anger seems misplaced. For one thing, Larkin did not sleep with Maeve for seventeen years. ("I'm extremely faithful by nature,"



Larkin wrote to Maeve, and nothing here disputes that.) Both women knew about each other almost from the start, and Larkin was more honest with them than most men in his position would be. And anyway, if this seventeen-year "triangle" was as unbearable as Maeve and Monica now claim, they are as much at fault for perpetuating it as was Larkin.

In 1961 Larkin began corresponding with—and championing—the novelist Barbara Pym, who had fallen out of favor after publishing a string of acclaimed books in the 1950s. It was his unselfish devotion to her novels in fact, that succeeded in resuscitating her reputation. Pym and Larkin also saw eye to eye politically. When planning to meet for the first time at an Oxford hotel in 1975, Larkin told Pym that he would be able to deduce who she was by "progressive elimination—i.e., eliminating all the progressives."

After a Labour victory in 1964, Motion writes, Larkin began to air his "political prejudices more and more freely." After students locked a campus building, Larkin complained to Conquest: "We're off the boil at present, having licked the blacking off the boots of all students in sight." And to Amis he wrote: "F--- the whole lot of them, I say, the decimal-loving, nigger-mad, army-cutting, abortion-promoting, murderer-pardoning, daylight-hating ponces."

His sagging spirits were lifted briefly by Margaret Thatcher's victory in 1979: "Oh, I adore Mrs. Thatcher," he remarked. "At last politics makes sense to me. . . . Recognizing that if you haven't got the money for something you can't have it—this is a concept that's vanished for many years." Motion, for his part, calls the Larkin of these years "narrowly defensive and nationalistic," impugns him for supporting the Falklands war, and reproves him for venting his ire in letters to Amis after finding scrawled on the walls of an elevator: "F--- OFF LARKIN YOU C--T."

In 1982 the essay collection *Required Writing* was published, in Motion's words, "to universal acclaim." Two years later Larkin declined Thatcher's offer of the Laureateship, in part because he had more or less stopped writing poetry. But when Ted Hughes was chosen instead, Larkin wrote to Amis that "the thought of being the cause of Ted's being buried in Westminster Abbey is hard to live with. 'There is regret. Always, there is regret.'"

In 1985 Larkin's health deteriorated. He had no appetite: his tongue, he said, felt "like an autumn leaf." When inoperable cancer was discovered, Monica chose not to tell him. Just days after surgery, while still at the hospital, Larkin drank some whiskey someone had smuggled in, vomited, flooded his lungs, and almost died. On returning home, he rewrote his will, leaving his $500,000 estate to Monica, the Society of Authors, and the Royal Society for the Prevention of

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Cruelty to Animals. A bequest to Maeve Brennan was cancelled. In late November, he collapsed in his bathroom with his face pressed against the heating pipes. Monica called an ambulance. When it arrived "he looked up at her wildly, begging her to destroy his diaries." (He always intended to do this himself; his final wish was carried out not by Monica but by Betty Hesketh, his secretary, who fed the thirty-odd books into the university shredder.) Three days later Larkin died, turning to a hospital nurse to say: "I am going to the inevitable."

"The obituaries generally agreed," Motion writes, that Larkin

> had been "the greatest living poet in our language," the writer who spoke most intimately to an enormous range of people, and the personality who for all his reticence "cared most for what we all care about." . . . He had produced poems that spoke exactly as he—and Samuel Johnson—believed art should: helping people endure life, as well as enjoy it. . . .
>
> This was a cold comfort to Monica, [who didn't attend the funeral]. Isolated . . . ill, virtually unknown to the outside world . . . she felt her life disintegrate. She had no existence without Larkin. She was a widow without even the consolation of that title. . . . Drinking heavily, not bothering to change out of her nightdress and dressing-gown during the day, she surrendered to her sorrow.

Motion has relied on three main sources: Monica Jones, Maeve Brennan, and the cache of letters that became available under the terms of Larkin's contradictory will. And it is doubtful that Monica Jones is worthy of the total trust Motion places in her. Her irritation with Larkin is expected, and some of it may even be warranted, but that doesn't mean that Motion should accept everything she says. "He cared a tenth as much about what happened around him as he did what was happening inside him;" is a typical remark. Maeve Brennan, too, has an axe to grind, and Motion accepts everything she says: "I wonder whether I really knew him at all," Maeve observes at one point. "He had feet of clay, didn't he? Huge feet of clay."And Motion is not content simply to iterate her claims:

> The indecision, lies, and contradictions which often characterized his life with Maeve and Monica . . .
>
> He was too self-absorbed to respond to [Monica's] grief.
>
> The modesty of Larkin's letters to Maeve [modest, that is, because they "conceal" the "true" vicious self Larkin reserved for Conquest and Amis] makes them seem—in their well-meaning way—deceitful.
>
> In a letter Larkin sent to Maeve . . . it is clear that he was not so much a reformed character as a more [sic] self-tormenting liar.

Motion relies heavily on the letters, but the ones he quotes showing the poet's smutty and repellant side are atypical—an effort, it seems, to "prove" that Larkin was a creep all along. Larkin wrote his mother two loving letters a week; at one point, when she was sick, he wrote every day. All except one are ignored by Motion. Motion's reason for slighting this important group of letters? Because they are "doting," "trivial," and show an "amiable banality." (Larkin's letters to his mother are also completely ignored by Thwaite in the *Selected Letters*.) The letters to Monica showing warmth and affection, and there are plenty, are kept to a minimum; the same goes for the hundreds of congenial letters to Maeve. The dozens of extant letters from Maeve to Larkin—and they are, by Motion's own admission, "affectionate, tender, enthusiastic, and gossipy"—are also disregarded. The correspondence with Pym gets short shrift.

Such letters are downplayed to make room for those that show Larkin at his most lascivious ("I agree *Bamboo & Frolic* are tops, or rather the bottoms; do pass on any that have ceased to stimulate"), juvenile ("Sod and bollocks anyway. Not to mention c--t and f---. Omitting bugger and s--t"), or right-wing ("Term starts soon; you can guess how I look forward to it. Little subsidised socialist sods. See you on the breadline").

Another low blow is Motion's equating of the bigotry found in a handful of letters written mainly when Larkin was drunk, and only to those who wouldn't be offended, with a real, substantive politics. Larkin organized no marches, campaigned for no candidates, wrote no editorials, joined no racist clubs, and was above reproach in his dealings with people. (The only time he voiced any political views was in two interviews done late in life and in a couple of poems.) As a full-time librarian he spent countless hours with women, "Pakis," and Jews, and not a single incident of intolerance, obnoxiousness, or political rancor is reported. The great affection Larkin's female colleagues at Hull felt for him belies Motion's claim that his "hostility to women would sometimes soften but never entirely disappear." Without real meanness or real political activism to bash Larkin with, Motion is forced to equate juvenile opinions expressed by a half-soused poet in a few private letters never intended for public consumption with political activity itself. It is one of the more disgraceful deeds in the history of literary biography.

Monica and Maeve are not the only ones whose facts are suspect. The third-hand testimony of Patsy Murphy, who died in 1977 of alcohol poisoning, appears unreliable, yet Motion reports it without so much as a raised eyebrow. Evidently Murphy told her ex-husband, the Irish poet Richard Murphy, that she had read portions of Larkin's diaries years before and without permission while at Larkin's house. Paraphrasing the Murphys, Motion describes them as a

> sexual log book . . . full of fantasies . . . a repository for his rage against the world. . . . Patsy opened the secret drawer in Larkin's life and glimpsed his grimmest, sexiest, most angry thoughts. . . . Even his most candid letters only hint at their intensity. To gauge them we might think of some of the seethingly bitter things he wrote to [school friend Jim] Sutton as a young man, then multiply them.

Poor Larkin: he is rebuked for shrinking from action, for denying his mother an active role in his life, for being unable to write love poems when young, for criticizing his parents in a youthful memoir, for being controlled in his letters to Maeve but uncontrolled in those to Amis, for being a "prisoner of the past," for being motivated solely by the "cold drops of self-interest," for being jealous, rude, self-deprecating, self-absorbed, self-promoting, and lazy. (The last is my favorite: Larkin oversaw the transformation of the Hull library from a tiny backwater collection into one of the great provincial libraries.) "His moment had passed; his life was ending," writes Motion near the end of his narrative, and one can't help but read into the line a certain degree of relish. ❐

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MEXICAN AMERICANS: THE AMBIVALENT MINORITY

Peter Skerry

The Free Press / 463 pages / $27.95

reviewed by TIM W. FERGUSON

This Independence Day, the *New York Times* revived the idea that Hispanics might be shifting to the GOP. The peg for this story was the 43 percent of the Mexican-American vote that helped Richard Riordan win the Los Angeles mayoralty. The notion is premature at best. For one thing, the circumstances were unusual—Riordan, a Catholic Republican, was opposed by a Chinese-American Democrat who banked his hopes on black precincts and took Latinos for granted. More important, the turnout among Mexican-Americans was even lower than usual; the *L.A. Weekly* figured them at 10 percent of the electorate, barely above what they'd been in 1973, before their numbers in L.A. tripled.

Near the end of the *Times* story was a discordant quote from Peter Skerry, director of UCLA's Washington program, who observed that the group in question was basically working-class and Democrat. Skerry could have said more—and has. In *Mexican Americans: The Ambivalent Minority*, he paints a complex picture of an ethnic bloc whose history of being exploited now includes a skillful appropriation by the political left.

The Spanish-surnamed elite that is now steering this group toward "racial claimant politics" must overcome the deep-seated conservatism of the masses, Skerry says, but manipulation by the professional and intellectual few is frequently successful. Comparing San Antonio (where Mexican influence is relatively ingrained and stable) with Los Angeles (where the foreign-born percentage of population is four times that of San Antonio), Skerry argues that the latter environment invites ideological misrepresentation. Among the villains are an electoral machine that virtually anoints representatives for L.A.'s Latino areas, grievance-oriented national organizations such as the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF); and activism on campuses that are still a "safe haven" for 1960s-style militancy.

Fundamentally, however, he believes the problems stem from an acceptance of mass illegal immigration (by libertarians and neoconservatives as well as the left) that has disrupted, in places like Los Angeles, the natural development of what might broadly be called citizenship.

Turning to San Antonio, the author sympathetically describes the Saul Alinsky–trained organizers, led by Ernesto Cortes, who galvanized Mexican-American residents to demand, as a constituency like any other, their share of city services. Comparisons are drawn with the ethnic politics of Boston, which is cast on the whole as a positive model. Skerry admires Willie Velasquez's Southwest Voter Registration Education Project, and favorably describes home-grown politicians such as former mayor—and now HUD secretary—Henry Cisneros, whom he regards as genuine agents of their people even as their stars have risen. He finds it paradoxical that in Texas—the "Mexicans' Mississippi," according to L. H. Gann and Peter J. Duignan in *The Hispanics in the United States*—Mexican Americans have developed a greater sense of belonging. Texas was also the birthplace of the various national groups—MALDEF, LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens), the American GI Forum—that have identified themselves with concerns of the community.

"Community" is an awful term, but it is an alternative to "minority," whose use begs a question Skerry calls central. Are Mexican Americans a minority, entitled to special "rights"? Or are they "ethnics," assimilating themselves as so many of the nation's other cultures have done and are doing? Skerry clearly prefers the second course, but he is apprehensive that, outside of San Antonio, the story is not unfolding that way.

The Los Angeles model is a disaster, and for that Skerry places considerable blame on wide-open immigration policies:

> The hundreds of thousands of immigrants arriving in Los Angeles have brought with them the traditional values of rural villages and small towns left behind in Mexico. But in Southern California such values have few places to take root and sustain themselves. Moreover, they stand in stark contrast to the pervasive, even intrusive American mainstream. Thus, in Los Angeles these newcomers face a choice between two quite disparate alternatives, with very

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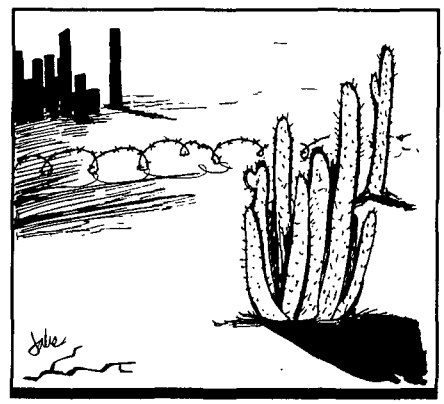
little in between. In San Antonio, on the other hand, a distinct Mexican-American subculture has had more opportunity to develop and lodge itself in strong community institutions.

Not only has the influx into Los Angeles brought upheaval to close-in "suburban" areas, where ordinary street activity has been laid low by gunplay and vandalism, but in Latino areas such as East L.A., Skerry says, overcrowding and transience have pushed out homeowner families that are the key anchors. Successive waves of illegal newcomers set back attempts to absorb Mexicans into the mainstream, and impede the formation of basic social units. "Compared to the San Antonio cousins," Skerry notes, "Mexicans in Los Angeles lack strong identification with their neighborhood or parish."

Mexicans have a low naturalization rate, and the huge numbers of noncitizens thwart the evolution of an organic Mexican-American politics in L.A. Canvassing for voters, Skerry observes, is highly inefficient when precincts are full of the ineligible. Under laws that establish electoral districts by population rather than numbers of voters, officials are selected by tiny turnouts and need maintain no real popular base. As such, representatives owe their allegiance not to a naturally moderate constituency, but to the left-liberal agenda-setters who arrange their campaign financing. (This remains far from a seamless union with the left. The liberals Skerry spoke with express frustration that Mexican Americans, to the degree they eschew definition as a racial minority, don't make as good a "cause" as blacks; and the elite's agenda, especially on abortion rights, keeps candidates out of Catholic churches, where they might actually interact with constituents.)

In Los Angeles, the predominant "machine" has been headed by city councilman Richard Alatorre and state senator Art Torres. A breakaway faction led by Los Angeles County supervisor Gloria Molina is more rooted in community activism but similarly leverages low turnouts and also draws outside ideological infusions, in its case from well-off feminists in and out of the city. Serving interest groups in Sacramento is the name of the game in California, leaving the East L.A. power brokerage less accountable, and less benign, than political machines elsewhere. In using the extended Voting Rights Act (VRA) to widen its clout, the machine has worked with MALDEF and other groups with national agendas. (The classic example came in the 1991 supervisorial race, when a MALDEF lawsuit voided the primary victory of Sarah Flores, a moderate of Mexican descent. After a gerrymander to *ensure* a Latino supervisor, Molina was elected by a paltry turnout of voters.) Contemporary application of the VRA, Skerry writes, has led to "rotten boroughs" susceptible to outsider string-pulling. The extraordinary drought of Latino officeholders in L.A. (not a sole city councilman or county supervisor from 1962-85) has been broken, but the city's largest ethnic segment still has no real organic politics.

The reason, Skerry would say, is again the dislocative effect of immigration. MALDEF and other pressure groups



fight limits on access to the U.S. welfare state by the millions who cross the border, whose arrival in turn assures the continued, symbiotic reign of the sitting politicians and the pressure groups. All the while, Skerry notes, the free-market right nods its head.

Skerry's framework is sociopolitical, with only scattered references to anything economic. To his way of thinking, the number of ethnics active in politics and in public-sector jobs is a mark in San Antonio's favor. One could argue that the stronger private-sector emphasis in Los Angeles, and indeed in Dallas and Houston, is a positive reflection: San Antonio is relatively poor even today. But it is not enough to tout L.A.'s comparative vibrancy; the heavy involvement of recently arrived Latinos in the Los Angeles riot of 1992 makes it clear that economic man still seems to need a civic compass.

To establish that is not to resolve what might be done, about either immigration or the struggle to assimilate newcomers. Few would suggest repeating the massive repatriations that actually shrunk the Mexican-born population of the U.S. in the 1930s and 1950s. Some breather from illegal entries, at least into saturated areas, would surely help—and in fact may already be occurring. Many conservative Republicans would be content to keep immigrant hands out of the welfare-state cookie jar. But in this vein the trend toward immigration of whole families, versus more trouble-prone single males, is a mixed blessing. It provides more stable households but also opens up a panoply of state benefits, especially when children are born as U.S. citizens. Thus, an attack on public subsidies to the "undocumented" is likely to involve an assault on intact Latino families. (The same is the case with local Asian refugees, big recipients of handouts even while working hard and leading normal suburban lives.)

In regard to shoring up citizenship standards, there is much to Skerry's points. Political organizations, whether confrontational like the Alinsky bodies or accommodationist like the old LULAC, can help deracinated people get a piece of their new rock. By contrast, the encouragement of attitudes drawn from the post-1965 civil rights campaigns for blacks, of being victimized and apart, is a recipe for prolonged social schism. "In our impatience with the wrongs suffered by racial minorities," Skerry writes, "we forget what a long and arduous process it is for immigrants to become full participants in American life. . . . By trying to jump-start the process, we end up short-circuiting it."

Complexity dictates that the case for a blending with the native U.S. culture cannot be made unreservedly. In some ways, the new arrivals, in fact, assimilate rapidly—so fast that Skerry sees a backlash among the younger Latinos that results in some of the retro nonsense on the campuses. People have to be taught how to rip off the worker-compensation system, but they learn quickly. The California Identity Project by four Chicano scholars at UCLA last year drew a flattering portrait of the personal-responsibility traits of Latinos, but some

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of those habits tend to diminish in later generations of U.S. residency. And now, we hear from the state of California that unwed births among Latinas have skyrocketed to nearly the rate among blacks. Maybe settling in isn't always a good thing.

Nonetheless, the sense of a shared stake in things political is a prerequisite for peace in economic cauldrons such as Los Angeles. Yet this foundation of unity often goes unbuilt. Left-liberal elites in California, brown, white and black, run the politics of the barrio from the top down but can effectively fan the fires of discontent below. They have fostered a minority-rights atmosphere that has muddied Mexican-American opinion on two subjects on which it might otherwise be anti-elite: bilingual education, which parents have been duped into accepting as a quick route to English proficiency; and unlimited immigration, now "the overarching and defining issue of Mexican-American politics." Contrariwise, Skerry argues that these hair-trigger issues and the onset of "minority" status do harm. He doesn't think all the rhetoric will lead to "our own Quebec," but he does see a world of hurt on the heels of liberal impulse. The prospect of a lasting divide is more sobering than any blip in the Republican vote among Hispanics is heartening. ❐

THE MORAL SENSE

James Q. Wilson

The Free Press / 300 pages / $22.95

reviewed by JAMES BOWMAN

Considering how intellectually weak the case for it is, moral relativism in our time has proved remarkably resilient. The belief that our ineffable human dignity entitles us to decide what moral rules we will and will not obey, either as a culture or, most recently, as individuals, is obviously the very negation of rule and morality. But like some fabulous, scaly movie monster, this belief can absorb shot and shell from some pretty devastating intellectual cannonry without slowing in its progress toward the helpless town that it has taken it into its head to devour.

I remember how my own goodtime teenage relativism was finally blown out of the water when I read, under the mistaken impression that it was just a book about education, *The Abolition of Man*, by C.S. Lewis. At the time, that book was already a generation old—a generation that had grown up with "situational ethics" and hippie, do-your-own-thing morality not obviously impeded in their careers by such philosophical cavils. A generation later, as a teacher, I tried to use the same book to make some dent in the invincible self-satisfaction of children who, seemingly from birth, had never doubted that every man was his own Moses. By that time, teens were too uneducated to understand it.

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The latest champion of natural morality comes in the unlikely form of a social scientist from California. In *The Moral Sense*, James Q. Wilson writes in the language of psychology, sociology, anthropology, and social biology, rather than that of the traditional moral philosopher, so it may be that he stands a better chance of being listened to and understood. But he is still doing battle with the dominant tendency of modern thought, from Marx's contention that morality and religion were mere "phantoms formed in the human brain" to Richard Rorty's denial of any "core self" or distinctively human quality whatsoever.

Wilson's purpose is not to act as advocate for any system of morality but rather to establish the basis for all morality in human nature. This is territory not to be ventured upon lightly. Sartre thought he was nailing God's coffin shut with his denial that any such thing as human nature existed. But Wilson comes to the question with an empirical outfit that now seems much more the right equipment for resolving it. The core of his book consists of chapters on Sympathy, Fairness, Self-Control, and Duty, which draw upon a combination of common sense and the latest research in the social sciences to show that the foundations of any developed morality are not cultural artifacts but congenital human dispositions—that we are furnished by God or Nature with a more or less sophisticated understanding of right and wrong.

I remember reflecting on this some years ago when I took my two-year-old son for his first experience of day care. As I left him there and he struggled to hold back the tears, I thought: Who taught him that it was better to be brave than to cry? Neither his mother nor I had, so far as I knew. And yet romantic reverence for nature seems to take it as given that such restraint is artificial, the product of the arts of civilization working upon authentic nature. "Curse braces; bless relaxes," said Blake—because braces are man-made and relaxes are natural. Freudianism is based on the same dualism. But maybe "repression" and self-control are natural, too. As Shakespeare said, the art itself *is* nature.

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This does not mean that we are born genetically programmed for moral behavior: only that there is "some heritable disposition" towards certain practical moral norms such as sympathy, fairness, etc. Wilson sees this disposition as the product of the child's innate desire for sociability and very early learning of what is necessary for successful social interaction. In the case of self-control, for example, "it becomes a dimension of morality to the extent that it implicates the fundamental features of man's social nature: the respect for and the obligation toward others with whom we spend our lives or from whom we expect important benefits."

If morality is anything more than an artificial construction invented by the powerful as a means of maintaining social control, why is it so variable? Within living memory, racism was morally okay and premarital sex was not; now it is the other way around. More importantly, if man has a moral nature, why does he so often behave in ways that others consider immoral?

Once again, Wilson falls back on the idea of "dispositions." Morality, it is true, cannot be reduced to a generic system of universal rules, and the futile search for such a thing has only given the game to the relativists by default. Instead, Wilson wants us to recognize universal dispositions, whose practical expression is more or less determined by social realities. The disposition to sympathy, for example, may apply only within a tightly circumscribed social group in a tribal culture, whereas in a highly developed modern urban culture it can apply, in theory at any rate, to all mankind and even the higher animal species.

The point, perhaps, is this: How do you get, morally, from tribal culture to modern urban culture? If there is no discernible common ground on which Abraham the Patriarch and Barbra Streisand can both stand, a merely theoretical justification of universal moral dispositions is of little value. That is why, to my mind, the real meat of Wilson's book is in the penultimate chapter, called "The Universal Aspiration":

> However common the savagery, bloodletting, and mendacity of contemporary life, a growing fraction of mankind lives under the claim that men and women are entitled to equal respect. The spread of that claim is extraordinary; even more extraordinary is the fact that so many people sometimes obey it. We are appalled by occasional stories of torture, but at one time thoughtful people approved of its routine use. We are angry at terrorists who take hostages, but once diplomacy was largely conducted by the mutual seizing of hostages, and hardly anyone save their immediate family thought their fate was of the least interest. . . . It is not that modern man is kinder, fairer, or more dutiful than his primitive forebears; in fact, man for man, he may be less kind, less fair and less dutiful. It is, instead, that whatever may be his moral proclivities, they now encompass a larger number of people.

Why this should be the case is explained in a fascinating tour through history and social anthropology, which takes us from Biblical times to the present day and identifies in that vast expanse of time the events that took Western culture further down the road to universalism than any other in history. Among these are the supersession of arranged marriages by consensual ones in the early Middle Ages, the growth of commerce and exploration in the later Middle Ages and the growth of the idea of private property which took place in England somewhere between the early and late Middle Ages. The change in marriage customs, which was essential to the breakdown of Western tribalism, was by far the most important of these.

Such historical particularities are key. Despite what earnest Utopians would like to believe, mankind was never in a position and never could be in a position to choose some tribe's system (still less some invented system) of morality off the shelf and say: This will now apply universally. But the particular combination of moral and social circumstances obtaining in northwestern Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries led to the Enlightenment, the abolition of slavery, the expansion of the franchise, the emancipation of women—things that happened spontaneously nowhere else and that have determined the configuration of the moral universe for the late twentieth century not only in the West but, increasingly, throughout the world.

It is no criticism of Wilson to wish for a fuller discussion than we get here of the drawbacks as well as the advantages of modern universalism. He does recognize the need for balance. The "senseless violence" of the war in the Balkans, for example, is the other side of the coin to the equally senseless cooperation on which the universal aspiration depends. "Affiliation requires boundaries," Wilson proclaims; "a 'we' must be defined on some basis if there are to be any obligations to the 'we'; and once there is a we, there will be a 'they.'" But he does not consider directly the possibility that a society such as our own, in which the "we" is so attenuated, in which the universal aspiration is stretched so thin and covers so much, may be in danger of breaking up into a chaos of new tribalisms—as, it could be argued, some of our inner cities have already done.

But such a scary journey through the implications of the historical process he has so convincingly traced is outside his purpose. Instead he writes, as C.S. Lewis wrote, in vindication of human nature and its innate moral sense. The success with which he has done so makes of this book a milestone for intellectual progress in our time. ❐

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RACE MATTERS

Cornel West

Beacon / 105 pages / $15

BLACK STUDIES, RAP, AND THE ACADEMY

Houston A. Baker, Jr.

University of Chicago Press / 110 pages / $16.95

CHALLENGING THE CIVIL RIGHTS ESTABLISHMENT: PROFILES OF A NEW BLACK VANGUARD

Edited by Joseph G. Conti and Brad Stetson

Praeger / 240 pages / $22.95

reviewed by M. D. CARNEGIE

It is no coincidence that new books by two of our nation's leading black academics are very thin. That Princeton now boasts the preeminent Afro-American Studies department in the nation says little about the quality of research being done there—Cornel West, the department head, freely admits that he shunned Harvard because Boston radio stations don't play enough soul music—and rather more about the shoddy standards of contemporary academic life, which champions identity politics and continental jargon over real scholarship.

But the fraudulence promulgated by white meta-theorists under the thrall of Parisian *poseurs*, no longer taken seriously even in their native land, is a mostly harmless one. Except for the unfortunate few students who get suckered into believing the diacritical mumbo-jumbo amounts to anything, and then end up parroting it in graduate school and beyond, the white kids by and large have little to lose from the depredations and bizarreries of their professors. Like the Woodstock radicals who spent their finest years smoking hashish and copulating in the back of Volkswagen buses, only to end up as litigation attorneys anyway, the typical white Ivy Leaguer is off to a relatively cushy start. If he emerges after four years knowing more Derrida than Dante, it hardly leaves him at a significant disadvantage relative to his peers.

The mountebankery of black intellectuals is a separate and unequal matter altogether. The relative scarcity of blacks among the chattering classes has traditionally ensured that one or two public figures serve as spokesmen for the entire race. The absurdity of such an arrangement is readily understood by imagining who might possibly "speak for" all white people. And as black society has developed the striations of class that are proof positive of both economic gain and at least some degree of equal opportunity, race has become a less and less predictable measure of everything from income to education level to political affiliation.

Instead of celebrating this independence, however, by which upwardly mobile blacks are freed from being inevitably lumped with gangster hoodlums, an appalling number of black intellectuals continue to insist that the world be seen through the distorting lens of color. Jealously protective of their outdated role as race spokesmen, they encourage various stripes of radicalism and racial chauvinism, which are absolutely the last things a young black student presented with a college opportunity—be he at Harvard or Howard—needs or ought to care about. The white radicals often had Daddy's money to fall back on after their experimentation on the commune went sour. But until blacks have garnered sufficient capital with which to be utterly frivolous (and the radical intellectuals are the first to point out that blacks haven't), the temptation of the black middle class down the road of racial radicalism by their intellectuals represents a *trahison des clercs* of catastrophic dimensions.

Cornel West, one of the most charismatic and forceful black intellectuals of his generation, declares unabashedly: Race matters. Describing the Los Angeles riots that left fifty-four dead as "justified social rage," he harrumphs incessantly about "white racist society." When conservatives point hopefully to black success stories, he accuses them of "a vulgar rendition of Horatio Alger in blackface" and says that "after centuries of racist degradation, exploitation and oppression in America, being black means being minimally subject to white supremacist abuse."

But of course race matters when you deem society to be, as West does on almost every page, a tool of oppression by which white folks degrade and subjugate blacks. "The prevailing myths of black sexuality," he writes, for example, "are part of a wider network of white supremacist lies." No matter that these myths are publicly discredited (and privately affirmed) by members of both races; West insists that society was established to keep blacks down. And when he writes that "rap performer Ice-T is harshly condemned while former Los Angeles Police Chief Daryl F. Gates's anti-black comments are received in polite silence," he glosses over obvious evidence to the contrary. Ice-T generated

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such controversy precisely because he had been *embraced* by the mainstream, not because of the color of his skin. And if West doubts that the shocking remarks of prominent blacks are not often met with deaf ear, he ought to read some Louis Farrakhan or Gus Savage transcripts.

It is not only the academic perversion of the age, of course, that causes a tenured black professor at Princeton to fritter away his energies blaming the white man. West knows the radical, racial boilerplate sells books, makes reputations, and cowers those afraid to call—West's phrase—a spade a spade. The bottom line, however, is a Princeton professor of religion defending his intellectual arguments with the seditious rantings of a street hood rapper. By rejecting distinctions of occupation, class, education, and social prominence, West underscores his belief that the rapper and the professor are but two sides of the same (devalued) black coin. Race not only matters; it is the *only* thing that matters. If you told white college students that they were just the same as the white kids in the ghetto, they could easily laugh it off. But as black middle-class identity is still at a rather new and fragile stage, the racialist crowing of West and his fellow travelers serves only to harm the young blacks who have the most to lose by squandering their university education on identity politics and *passé* radicalisms.

West's ranting also helps to gloss over the rather poor quality of his writing and thought. He writes "of a [sic] inchoate xenophobia" and claims, "If there is a hidden taboo among liberals, it is to resist talking too much about values" (his emphasis) when, of course, he means to say the very opposite—that the liberals' taboo is to talk about them, not resist doing so. Of course, the era in which we might expect an Ivy League professor to write clearly and accurately is long past, but we shouldn't laud the decline. Just as when Houston Baker refers to Allan Bloom as "Alan" and journalist-screenwriter Nelson George as a "scholar," we are given just cause to wonder if the "intellectuals" in question really have the goods.

Houston Baker, professor of English and "Human Relations" at the University of Pennsylvania, bolsters his bona fides by submerging himself in the impenetrable blather of post-modernist theory. Like West he saddles up the rap hobby-horse; he believes it is fully impossible to engage young minds in literature without recourse to rap. Rather like saying you can't teach a person to read music without a boom box, of course, but not a surprising argument from an intellectual who seems incapable of comprehending either word or world without the aid of a technological apparatus—in this case, the jargon machine of post-modernism.

For Baker, a cigar is never only a cigar. He describes a street festival as a "collaged multiplicity of sound and image" and the university as "a metonym for social chaos." Every sentence is stuffed to the gills with hybridities and axiologies, renominalizations and reverse cyborgisms. Chess is "the Western board game of war" and "the notion of preserving infinite historical value and unquestioned excellence in the referential files of the English department is at best a quixotic extension of Arnoldian cultural economics."

Filling the minds of black college students with this blarney serves only to divert their energies into a semantic *cul de sac*. Everybody knows that language-gaming has destroyed much of intellectual life in recent decades; but as almost all black public figures are quick to point out, blacks remain in sore need of intellectual leadership. For black intellects to feed our young a diet of Frenchified jargon—and pretend it is a way of studying the plight of American blacks!—is especially perverse and irresponsible.

Then again, responsibility is evidently a quality not dear to Baker. About the brutal Central Park wilding incident, he can muster up only more linguistic folderol, spending several pages on how the police who handled the incident must have misheard "wild thing" for "wilding," and all the while having a laugh at whitey's misunderstanding of black street culture. He quotes with approval a *Village Voice* article in which a young man says, "I ain't never heard of [wilding]. Sounds like a white-boy rock type of thing." Again, one feels that for Baker, the only true things that exist are artifacts of language, and if nobody actually uses the term *wilding*, then the horrible assault might as well never have happened. Concerning the rape itself, he writes:

> The reason the Central Park jogger incident yielded no credible "whys" was precisely because the incident itself was *the answer*. It was the answer to the question that could have been formulated anytime during the past decade by almost anyone over the age of thirteen and breathing—the answer to the question: "What will happen next in the great contestation marking northeastern American urban, public spaces?"

Fortunately for all of us, there are a number of black intellectuals with the courage and wisdom not to hew the racialist line. Joseph Conti and Brad Stetson remind us that a cadre of thinkers and public policy advocates have attempted to steer the mainstream of black thought away from the shopworn formulations of identity politics and the civil rights establishment. That they are finally the subject of study can only be seen as a good sign; but that Thomas Sowell, now in his sixties, could be considered part of a "new vanguard" is testimony to how strong and strident the opposition to black conservatives has been.

Conti and Stetson offer analyses of four major contrarians—Sowell, Shelby Steele, Robert Woodson, and Glenn Loury. Scholars all (except for Woodson, who founded the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise), these men have refused to cast the struggle of black Americans within the too-narrow framework of race. Steele's writings, for example, offer a sophisticated analysis of affirmative-action, which causes blacks to feel "the stab of racial doubt" and tends to overuse the political capital of accumulated white guilt. Affirmative-action programs are discharged to expunge white guilt, he argues, but as such programs have helped a relative few, their overall social cost is rather a steep one. They are more successful at assuaging white guilt than at advancing non-middle-class blacks. Meanwhile, Glenn Loury, professor of economics at Boston University, takes issue with the rhetoric of impossibility and pessimism of complainers like Baker, West, and the white liberals who echo them. Responding to a *New Republic* editorial by Hendrik Hertzberg (now the Comment editor at the *New Yorker*), Loury writes:

> Quit trying to imagine what it's like for a black person "to experience contemporary American political culture."... I,

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having risen from a Chicago ghetto to a tenured post at Harvard, most emphatically, *do not feel excluded* from the "land of opportunity" tenet of America's civil religion. Got it?

In the essays that introduce *Challenging the Civil Rights Establishment*, the editors delineate the parameters within which the struggle for control of black public policy must be fought. While the rhetoric of oppression is carelessly bandied about by professional activists with their own axes to grind, Conti and Stetson note that the evidence often supports the assertion that even inner-city blacks have more opportunity than is customarily believed. In South Central Los Angeles, at ground zero of the 1992 riots, stands Los Angeles Southwest Junior College, which offers associate degrees and general education. Los Angeles Southwest admits anybody in the community, with or without a high school diploma, for an astonishing $5 per credit. (Even so, student loans are available.) In an effort to help more urban youth, however, students who maintain a C+ average there are offered four-year scholarships at USC covering 100 percent of tuition. If a student's financial standing is bad enough, USC will increase the stipend beyond tuition costs, which alone are currently $63,000 for four years.

Five dollars per credit and a C+ average at community college will get you a $63,000 scholarship at USC? It's a hell of a deal by any measure. But instead of pushing this program, Conti and Stetson note, community leaders keep haranguing everybody with a "rhetoric of hopelessness." The *Los Angeles Sentinel*, the largest black-owned newspaper in the West, featured a column after the riots in which the writer claimed that

> the United States is on the verge of becoming a police state, if it is not there already. I have carefully described the many similarities between present day USA and early stages of the Nazi Third Reich in pre-war Germany.

This is the strident ignorance that sells newspapers. Only an absolute know-nothing could believe such bogus polemics. Unfortunately, if the Wests and Bakers of the world continue to distort the intellectual life of the academy, the blacks who end up there will emerge as uninformed and unprepared for reality as the uneducated poor in South-Central. Intellectually underdeveloped, they will be stuck in the tragic mode of self-pity, and instead of having the world as their oyster, will discover themselves ill-equipped to do anything but beat incessantly upon the race drum. And then race will sadly have mattered very much indeed. ❐

THE FIFTIES

David Halberstam

Villard Books / 816 pages / $27.50

reviewed by RITA KRAMER

The Fifties begins, as did the fifties, with America ambivalently assuming leadership of the free world, and ends with a gathering momentum for radical social change. Best-selling journalist David Halberstam puts on display all the tumult of the decade: It saw Eastern liberal internationalists and Midwestern conservative isolationists battle over the direction of the Republican Party, and Senator McCarthy's exploitation of the growing fear of Communist subversion; the beginnings of the Cold War and the debate over the development of the hydrogen bomb; the Korean War, the last conflict not shown in America's living rooms; and the MacArthur-Truman showdown; the policy of containment seguing into the arms race; the growth of the national security apparatus and the expansion of the role of the CIA in covert operations; the beginnings of our involvement in French Indochina and the articulation of the domino theory; the race for outer space; the U-2 photo reconnaissance flights and the Soviet propaganda victory in launching *Sputnik*. A large-scale transformation, but Halberstam is content to sum up the decade as "a mean time. The nation was ready for witch hunts."

At the outset of the decade America's wealth and productivity, her industrial might and seemingly endless possibilities for growth created a consumer market of unprecedented abundance, all the more shocking for its contrast with the Depression and the War years. Highways crisscrossed what had been farmlands and opened up the new suburbs, where entrepreneurs like William Levitt took advantage of new technologies to develop low-cost mass housing for veterans' families. Blacks from the rural South began to migrate to northern inner cities. Women left the workforce to raise families, "isolated," as Halberstam ominously puts it, "in a world of other mothers, children, and station wagons." The consumer economy was turning out an abundance of home appliances, and the new medium of television was beginning to market and sell them.

Everything television touched would be turned into entertainment, not excluding politics. Even what Halberstam considers the watershed event of the decade—*Brown* v. *Board of Education*, and the beginning of the end of segregation in the South—could not have had the influence it did without television. The segregationist mobs hadn't expected that their ugly confrontation with the federalized National Guard troops escorting the black children to class would be captured by camera crews and broadcast all over the country. Halberstam sees Nixon's Checkers speech as a triumph for "the new electronic man in the new electronic age." Ironically, the decade would end with a coolly poised John F. Kennedy debating a tired, sweating Richard Nixon in a contest whose significance would not be lost on advisers to future candidates. →

Rita Kramer is the author most recently of Ed School Follies: The Miseducation of America's Teachers *(The Free Press).*

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Relieved of the hardships of the Depression and World War, a more worldly and more educated population began to remove restrictions on words and images that had formerly been banned. Explicit sexual material found its way into the plays of Tennessee Williams and a new sensuality was expressed by actors like Marlon Brando. Brando, Elvis Presley, and James Dean became the heroes of the developing rebel youth culture, misunderstood, "alienated"—and looking a lot like the juvenile delinquents who were becoming an increasing problem. Marilyn Monroe, *Peyton Place*, and *Playboy* announced a changing attitude toward sexuality. And although *The Feminine Mystique* was not published until early in the sixties, Halberstam can't resist noting that Betty Friedan was already at work on her "seminal book" cataloguing the complaints of desperate unfulfilled housewives isolated in their suburban prisons.

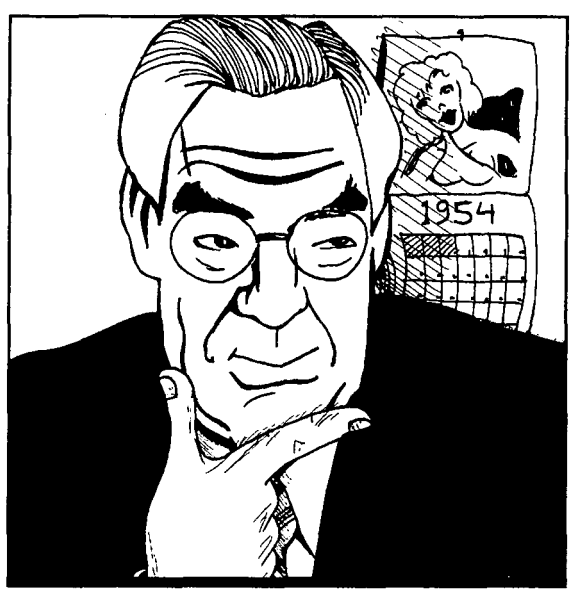
They were about to be liberated by medical technology. Clare Boothe Luce, hardly a radical feminist, greeted the birth control pill with the statement that "modern woman is at last free as a man is free, to dispose of her own body, to earn her living, to pursue the improvement of her mind, to try a successful career."

But what's wrong with this picture? There is a sense in which books like this tell us more about their own time than about their subject, and *The Fifties* sees its decade through the lens of present attitudes so taken for granted by the author that they pass without notice.

With that peculiar combination of the naive and the doctrinaire that characterizes the leading lights of American journalism, Halberstam parrots the conventional wisdom about traditional forms of authority, about how government should operate, about who are the good guys (Martin Luther King, Adlai Stevenson, Earl Warren) and who the bad guys (John Foster Dulles, Richard Nixon, the CIA).

Quoted in passing, and uncritically, about various matters are such authorities as Harrison Salisbury, Reinhold Niebuhr, Victor Navasky, John Steinbeck, Anthony Lewis—hardly a group representative of widely diverse viewpoints. Perhaps if such intellectuals had been quicker to recognize the evils of the far left and the not entirely spurious dangers of domestic subversion the job would not have fallen to oafs like McCarthy and the loutish members of HUAC.

Halberstam refers to "America's obsession with the Cold War," as though it were some kind of pathology. You would never know from anything this book reveals that the Communists had ever been a real threat or that there was any motive for opposing them other than stupidity or malice. His take on American foreign policy in the fifties is that invisible administration officials under Eisenhower deceived the American press and people, acting "in a netherworld of power and secrecy" like "an imperial country" and betraying our democratic traditions. And U.S. policy in Latin America is represented as entirely



dictated by the government's "partner in the area, United Fruit" in collusion with gangsters like Meyer Lansky.

To many of the media's gatekeepers, the only good thing about the fifties was that they led to the sixties.We are left with the promise that the New Left would spring up "to protest the bigness and indifference of American life." The villains, after all, turn out to be the usual suspects—conformity and capitalism. Yet, Halberstam never asks why "the great American boom," as *Fortune* called it, should have ended in alienation and rebellion on the part of so many of the young. He seems sympathetic enough with the literature and the music of protest, but has nothing to say, not even a question to raise, about the spread of ideas about group socialization and the therapeutic role the schools should play. All he offers instead is a rehash of the now familiar indictment of the television families portrayed on television. Did anyone ever seriously think "Ozzie and Harriet," "Leave it to Beaver," and "Father Knows Best" represented reality? That, as Halberstam maintains, Ozzie and Harriet had been "role models" for millions of Americans looking for the American dream in the suburbs any more than Laurel and Hardy had?

One begins to suspect that, as with the pages of details about the lives of such as Grace Metalious, we are getting size at the expense of shape, that many of these potted bios serve to hide the essential thinness of the material. In the end, *The Fifties* shares with the weekly newsmagazines a pretension to depth that barely disguises its superficiality. It sometimes seems that several different books—on the civil rights movement, on the music business, on the arms race—have been cut up and their chapters simply alternated. There is little real connection made between these various aspects of the fifties and little about them that one could not have read—and probably did—in *Time*. Perhaps to add an illusion of depth, there are long passages on such matters as the early life of Elia Kazan, Betty Furness, Ricky Nelson, Gene Ferkauf, or Hugh Hefner and the development of the mechanical cotton picker, but these are no substitute for the kind of analysis that would do more than recount events along with the liberal take on them.

Halberstam has an eye for the colorful detail, and the parade of personalities keeps his narrative this side of tedium. But he has added little to the received wisdom that the fifties were a shameful time of anti-Communist hysteria, in which faceless men went off on commuter trains to drudge at conformity-ridden corporate headquarters, leaving their wives at home living empty existences of anguish and frustration, all of them to be liberated by the new freedoms to come. As one who was there, I don't remember it quite like that. ❐

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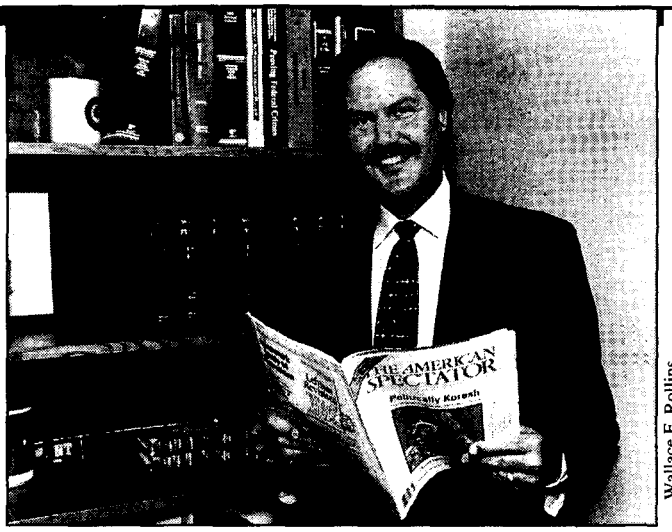

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CORRESPONDENCE
(continued from page 10)

summarize the Libertarian philosophy as I understand it.

While I respect the Libertarian philosophy as an intrinsic guide to good government, I'm slow to vote for a party that can't scrape enough people together to finish off a keg of beer. This is a point with which I'm sure Mr. O'Rourke is in accordance. I hope that his manifesto is picked up by the party to which he (presumably) and I belong. If four years of Willy the Wonk(a) are followed by four more years of the same, *this* reptile will welcome extinction.

—Michael R. Murray
Upper Darby, Pennsylvania

What's Love Got to Do With It?

Sentimental capitalist George Gilder is out to upset the economics apple cart based on a new and improved view of human nature ("Wealth and Poverty Revisited," *TAS*, July 1993). Entrepreneurs are really giving guys after all, unselfish types, stewards of the welfare of others.

But should these altruistic marvels be freed from the rigors of market competition? Not. Two economic axioms still hold: (1) Scarcity exists: Wants exceed the ability of limited resources to satisfy them; and (2) People are self-interested. As UCLA economist Jack Hirshleifer once put it, "All the world is largely governed by self-interest, and all the world knows it." Well, that part of the world not absorbed in their Gilder-goggles. Entrepreneurs are out for a buck, among other things. As Adam Smith wrote, "It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest."

Sure, capitalism encourages people to be considerate of others, take pride in serving others, etc. This is news? Bunk. The primary political value underlying Western civilization is that individuals are ends in themselves, that they have rights (a selfish idea). Let's not trade this in for Gilder's pottage. *—Morgan Reynolds*
Professor of Economics
Texas A&M University
College Station, Texas

Three cheers for "Wealth and Poverty Revisited"! George Gilder's enlightening article was a breath of fresh air in this Clintonite tax-and-spend world of ours. I am tired of the left's incessant bashing of the eighties economic boom as some kind of scheme for only the rich to get richer. George Gilder sets the record straight about supply-side economics (Reaganomics), and explains why demand-side economics (Clintonomics) empowers government, not people. Ronald Reagan was elected twice because his economic plan worked for everyone, even liberals. If *Wealth and Poverty* was the Bible of the Reagan administration, then that makes Reagan Moses and George Gilder God. Thanks for a great article.

—Frederick F. Hill
Richmond, Virginia

Hunter, M.D.

I received my August issue of *TAS* with my lengthy letter and Fred Barnes's response (Special Correspondence: "What Health-Care Crisis? Patients, Doctors, and Fred Barnes"). I just had to add a couple of comments:

Mr. Barnes is correct—I do want more primary-care doctors. However, I take exception to his statement, "That will be no help in treating serious illness." What exactly does he think I do all day? As an internist, I evaluate and treat some of the sickest patients admitted to hospitals. I do not refer everyone to a specialist and spend my time treating runny noses, sunburns, jock itch, and sprained ankles. I have treated countless complicated AIDS, congestive heart failure, cancer, inflammatory bowel, depressed, and too-numerous-to-mention other seriously ill patients in my career. Specialists are great, and I value their skills whenever I need assistance in evaluation and management. But Mr. Barnes is dead wrong if he thinks that all these specialists are the only answer to seriously ill patients.

Mr. Barnes astounds me when he asserts that all this cost-shifting has "one virtue: it works." It doesn't work any longer, and without reform it will be the death of our health-care system.

Mr. Barnes's understanding of Medicare is obviously deficient. "It [Medicare] doesn't cover all patient costs. True. That's why people get cheap Medigap insurance policies." Right. They are, first, not so cheap and second, responsible only for the 20 percent that Medicare does not pay of Medicare's determined allowable charge. That "allowable" charge is significantly below the actual charge for non-Medicare patients. For example, a private fee for a 40-minute office visit in an internist's office might be $135. But if Medicare only allows $75 for that service and pays 80 percent of that "allowable," which is $60, then the Medigap policy is only required to pay the additional $15 to the $75 level. The other $60 is written off by the doctor *by law*. Hence, cost-shifting. I wonder if non-medical businesses such as supermarkets, appliance stores, furniture stores, retail clothing, accountants, attorneys, and everyone else could survive such a government-mandated system. Imagine what we regular folks would pay for food if supermarkets were expected to write off up to 50 percent of their prices for several million customers.

As for Mr. Barnes's assertion that "it's their [patients'] bodies and their bucks," I am one of the strongest advocates for patient involvement in clinical decision-making and treatment decisions. However, patients have no right to demand a CT scan, an MRI scan, or a cardiac catheterization if there are no clinical indications to perform the tests. As for "their bucks," I haven't seen any patient fork over the $40,000 from his or her private bank account for coronary artery bypass surgery. Maybe Ross Perot or Donald Trump could do so, but the rest of us rely either on insurance for such procedures (which hardly makes it "my bucks") or we rely on the charity of a hospital and doctors who then cost-shift the price elsewhere, or we simply go without the procedure.

It is apparent from Barnes's response that he just doesn't get it.

—Walter R. Hunter, M.D.
Murrells Inlet, South Carolina

Fred Barnes replies:

Responding to Dr. Hunter is tricky. I've got to answer his gripes without prompting him to write again. Here goes:

Sir, no reflection on primary-care doctors, but when my back ached recently I went to an orthopedic surgeon, and when my foot was ailing I went to a foot doctor. I'm not alone. Folks with serious, specific ailments usually prefer specialists. That's why 70 percent of American doctors are specialists. This is just one more thing that's great about the American health-care system. Cost-shifting "the death of our health-care system"? Please. It keeps the system going without further government intervention.

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And, by the way, cost-shifting is routine in American business. Merchants attract customers with "loss leaders," products priced below cost. They cover the shortfall by profits from other products. Also, this bit about patients demanding needed high-tech care, counting on others to pay, is a straw man. Insurance companies won't pay for treatment if doctors don't certify it's necessary. In fact, the opposite is frequently the case: insurers won't pay even when doctors think the treatment is required.

Now, that said, will somebody please stop Dr. Hunter before he writes again?

Whither Russia?

Few things are more frustrating than someone's inability to learn from past mistakes. To me this is a hallmark of modern liberalism. All the signs of learning are confined to deceptive electoral tactics (Bill Clinton). The basic philosophy has never been questioned.

Conversely, it is heartening to watch people learn. A case in point is Cathy Young. For some time, and with no small puzzlement, I have been reading her reports, wondering what on earth such a sympathizer with ultra-liberal causes in Russia is doing in one of the top American conservative magazines? As an afterthought: writing for *TAS* should have done the trick, sooner or later. To her credit, Ms. Young never made any secret of her cultural, if not political affiliations; in fact she always writes with pride about her intelligentsia origins. This is where her heart belongs, this is where most of her information and opinions on Russia are coming from.

Fortunately, in her latest piece in *TAS* ("Russia Votes Yes," July 1993) she finally begins to question the validity of those views held by her Moscow friends—and this insight is long overdue. At last we can read some of the truth about Yeltsin, his personality, his "powers of persuasion." Also we are able to draw some conclusions on the nature of the so-called referendum and whether it may be viewed as a popular mandate for Yeltsin's policies.

Yeltsin's main support comes from the liberal intelligentsia in Moscow and St. Petersburg. His dubious "victory," much hailed in the West, was a direct result of the scare campaign launched by government-owned media, staffed and controlled by Yeltsin's liberal supporters. It must be noted that rural Russia (about 40 percent of the population), in fact, voted against Yeltsin in the referendum. American conservatives should take note of this fact.

Until now, Yeltsin enjoyed an amazing bipartisan support in the U.S. Some prominent conservatives (Paul Weyrich, to name just one) were giving Yeltsin and his people counsel and training. Richard Nixon met at the White House with Bill Clinton. The *New York Times* seemed to be singing in unison with *National Review*. I wonder if anyone has tried to analyze this touching unanimity, especially in the face of the ideological split Clinton's presidency is causing in America. What is so appealing about Yeltsin that he became the darling of *both the liberals and conservatives?*

My guess is: this happened because of a very successful effort on the part of Russian "democrats" (i.e., liberals) to paint all opposition to Yeltsin as coming from hard-line Communists, represented by parliamentary speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov. Western media (Cathy Young included) were relying heavily on liberal sources of information. A never-ending list of defections from the Yeltsin camp by some of his closest allies (Oleg Rumyantsev, Valery Zorkin, Alexander Rutskoi, and others) has been virtually ignored or explained away by personal ambitions and other ulterior motives. Curiously, not many observers dwelled on Yeltsin's personal ambitions and personal qualities.

The root cause of this chronic myopia seems to be a lingering Western paranoia about Communists, shared by both conservatives and their liberal rivals—long after the Cold War has ended. Communism, albeit dead, generates fear: Will there be a resurrection? Yeltsin is perceived as the one and only anti-Communist in Russia. This questionable premise somehow justifies support, but even then with a large degree of ambivalence: Yeltsin's own media, as everyone knows, kept the Vancouver meeting out of their headlines. And with good reason: no one wants to be seen as a puppet of foreign powers.

The truth is, the U.S. with all its allies does not have the money to prop up *any* puppet regime, least of all in Russia. Was, then, the whole "Support Yeltsin" fuss designed only for domestic consumption? Does this mean that support will be purely symbolic *and* covert at the same time? Isn't this a strange concept? Arguably, Yeltsin's contribution to the demise of Communism was considerable, but this is not sufficient reason to keep him in power indefinitely. Gorbachev's role in ending the Cold War was far more significant and profound; as a politician, Yeltsin is no match for Gorbachev—even with all the coaching and intellectual support he is getting. Still, not many attempts were made to defend Gorbachev when his political fortunes took a nose-dive (counting out the much ridiculed "Chicken Kiev" speech by George Bush). Why are we meddling in Russian affairs now, and if we do—why don't we first find out what sort of people or policies we are really supporting? Let's not be blinded by a primitive and false Manichean dichotomy—"Democrats" versus "Communists."

The West needs some honest, unbiased reporting capable of giving a true picture of what is going on in Russia. One of the main features of this picture is the virtual impossibility of any Communist revival. What is constantly giving ammunition to anti-Yeltsin forces is *Yeltsin himself*, and his "team"—power-hungry, ruthless, corrupt, and incompetent. The West should be looking for new, fresh faces, honest people of a conservative persuasion, not liberal demagogues. This will not be easy. As to Communism—Communism in Russia is gone forever.

—Vladimir Osherov
Westmont, Illinois

Cathy Young replies:

Mr. Osherov's letter sent me combing through my *TAS* columns to find what sort of "ultra-liberal" causes in Russia I had supported. The liberation of former Soviet republics? Freedom of the press? Free elections? Freedom of private trade? Private property? I admit that these causes have been championed by the liberal Russian intelligentsia; I might add that in Russia today, the word "liberal" is used exclusively in its "classical" sense. (True, it also implies social-issues liberalism, which places Russian liberals close to American libertarians—by my lights, not a bad place to be.) I also looked for signs of my alleged unthinking cheerleading for Boris Yeltsin. My December 1991 column contained strong criticism of Yeltsin and other prominent "democrats," such as former Moscow mayor Gavriil Popov, for their imperial and anti–free market moves. The February 1992 column, "'Democrats,'" quoted strongly worded criticism of the new

(continued on page 91)

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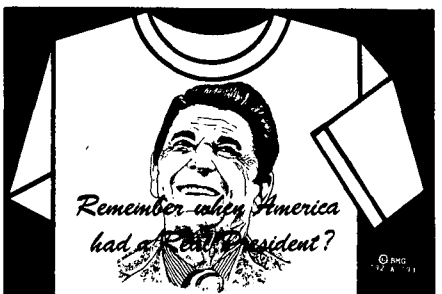

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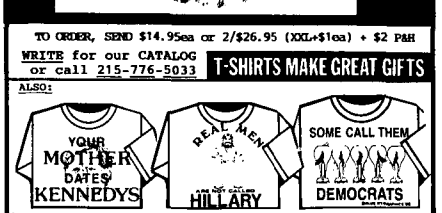

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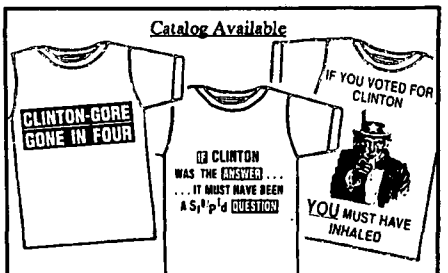
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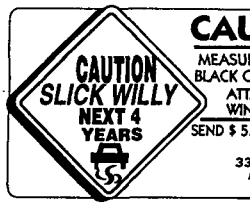

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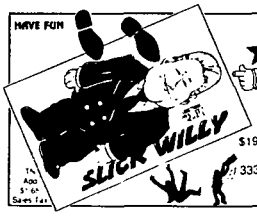

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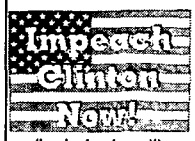

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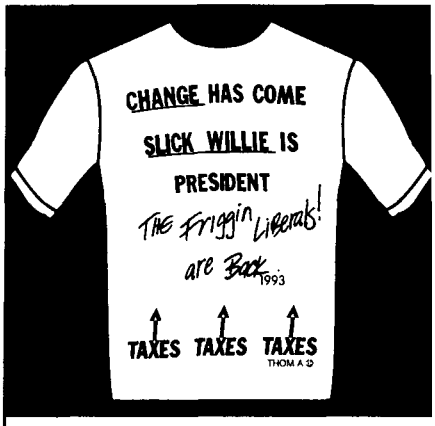

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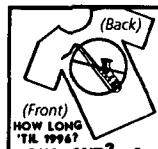

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CORRESPONDENCE
(continued from page 85)

"democratic nomenklatura" by advocates of radical political and economic reform; I did note that the radicals were not giving up on Yeltsin because they saw no positive alternative. I also find it amusing that Mr. Osherov should attribute my supposed pro-Yeltsinism to ties to the liberal Russian intelligentsia: in fact, most of the scathing remarks about the pre-referendum propaganda campaign quoted in my article came from intellectuals.

There is no doubt that Yeltsin's "team" is made up largely of power-hungry, corrupt, opportunistic nomenklatura men. I fully agree that our policy toward Russia should not put all our eggs in one basket and that the West should look for "fresh faces." What "conservative persuasion" would mean in the Russian context, I am not sure. Some anti-Communist Russian politicians, such as "Christian Democrats" Viktor Aksyuchits and Mikhail Astafiev, have tried to reclaim the term. Before too long, they revealed themselves as statist, xenophobic proponents of snail-paced economic change, willing to ally themselves with men like Russian Communist Party chief Gennady Zyuganov.

Oklahoma, Okay?

I was dismayed to read in R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.'s otherwise outstanding review of *The Real Anita Hill* (*TAS*, July 1993) that the University of Oklahoma is "one of the most useless universities in the land." I admit up front that part of my dismay can be attributed to the fact that both my wife and I are graduates of the university, and she is on the faculty there. But my quarrel with Mr. Tyrrell goes deeper than that.

What concerns me is not only the offhanded, petty tone of the remark but its complete lack of supporting evidence. I do not propose to offer a full-scale defense of OU; I suspect it is no better or worse than most state-supported universities in this country, which is to say that most likely some of its schools and departments are quite good, some are quite bad, and most are decidedly average. But to label an entire institution useless simply because of the presence of one faculty member is insupportable. . . .

—Cecil L. Peaden
Norman, Oklahoma

I take strong exception to, and am personally offended by, a book review by you in the July issue referring to the University of Oklahoma as "one of the most useless universities in the land."

I do not understand why you feel that way. But, more importantly, what did it add to an otherwise informative and stimulating book review to include that snide remark as almost an afterthought?

I am a proud alumnus of the University of Oklahoma and can assure you it is not "useless." You should be aware that the University of Oklahoma ranks in the top fifty universities as rated annually by *U.S. News & World Report*. The university for the last several years has recruited the third-largest number of National Merit Scholars attending tax-supported universities, and has one of the top rated engineering schools west of the Mississippi.

I am sure you did not intend to demean the University of Oklahoma and a retraction or apology would assure all your readers of that. *—C. E. Foster*
Group President,
Southwestern Bell Corporation
San Antonio, Texas

I found Mr. Tyrrell's remark to be irresponsible and inflammatory, if not mean-spirited and elitist. Oklahoma University has graduated no fewer competent and successful professionals than any other major state university. Oklahoma is a very conservative state, and I would expect that many OU graduates who are now medical doctors, lawyers, and corporate executives are enjoined in the struggle against political correctness and liberal misinformation. I am at a loss to understand why Mr. Tyrrell would choose to offend such people by wantonly disparaging their alma mater. Indeed, his remark is the type of insulting, outrageous comment one usually associates with liberals.

However, although disappointed with *TAS* in this instance, not being a liberal myself I will not cancel my subscription and encourage others to do likewise. Nor will I organize protest marches, demand a humiliating public apology, or plan a vicious personal revenge.

—Jerrie Presley
Ponca City, Oklahoma

I almost took exception to R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.'s comment that the University of Oklahoma "must be one of the most useless universities in the land." Being a 1983 OU graduate and for that summer the only conservative editor of a major college daily newspaper in the country (before it was fashionable to start conservative alternative publications), I might be expected to be offended. After all, if I could trick the OU Publications Board into letting me ascend to the editorship of the *Oklahoma Daily* despite a Bork-like paper trail of previous columns that enraged campus liberals, outraged many faculty, encouraged death threats etc., surely OU must have had some redeeming qualities.

But, sadly, a decade after my reign, RET may be correct. There has been a recent move to establish an endowed chair in the name of Anita Hill. Indeed, it has passed the first hurdle, helped out by a speech given to the Board of Regents by a journalism professor who used to denounce me. So in the last solicitation of alumni, I wrote across my form I would never contribute to an OU academic unit again. I plan to restrict my giving now to apparently the only serious units left on campus that eschew mediocrity, mendacity, and just plain silliness—the award-winning marching band (I'm an alumnus of that, too) and the national-championship-winning athletic department.

—Jeffrey D. Sadow
Assistant Professor
of Political Science
Louisiana State University
Shreveport, Louisiana

Hot Ticket

In the article, "What to Filibuster Next?" (*TAS*, July 1993), Grover G. Norquist reminds us of the GOP Town Hall meetings and their role in bucking up Republican opposition to Clinton's so-called "stimulus package." Our town hall in Fullerton, California, where we met with Reps. Ed Royce, Bob Dornan, Chris Cox, and Dana Rohrabacher, was crashed by Democratic hecklers. One was dressed in a Day-Glo orange jacket announcing that he was an Orange County Democrat. When I challenged him to let Republicans and Independents into town hall meetings with Clinton, his answer was, *Buy a ticket.* Odd that the GOP Town Hall was packed and no admission was charged, but the Democrats demand payment for admission to their gatherings. I guess they're more interested in separating people from their money than in representing the people in government. *—Daniel Mehlhorn*
Anaheim, California

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CURRENT WISDOM

New York Post

A brief moral disquisition from Garry Wills, never an inmate of a Castro prison, a Castro torture chamber, a Castro Cuba—but wouldn't it be pleasing to send him there?

. . . It is difficult to see any moral difference between hit teams sent out to dispatch Castro on the one side, and to dispatch Bush on the other.

[June 25, 1993]

TCR

(Times Company Report)

Anna Quindlen, crusader from the powder room, drops her guard:

About six months ago I looked at page one and saw that every story on it had been written by a woman, except for one story that had been written by an African-American man. And my heart soared. I thought, Anna, the next time you convince yourself things haven't changed, remember this.

[1993]

The Catherine Johns Program

(WLS 94.7 FM, Chicago)

Eric in Peoria calls Catherine Johns to do his uncanny impersonation of George Stephanopoulos:

ERIC: I—I honestly think—you know, Brit Hume—it—it goes a little beyond just this specific question. I think Brit Hume has just become downright snotty and I think Bill Clinton—you know, the press has been giving him such a hard time, I don't blame him for stand—I think it'll do nothing but help him. And I—I—you know, maybe it's just my personal bias, but when you look at Brit Hume—one of George Bush's best friends, contributor to *The American Spectator*—you know, it—you just almost begin to wonder if at some point where Brit Hume—his, you know, humanity and personal agenda—maybe just it—edging in.

[June 14, 1993]

McLaughlin Group

John McLaughlin tries to get off scot-free:

A final note: On a recent program, the word "welshing" was used as a synonym for reneging. We regret any offense this usage may have given to the people of Welsh ancestry or to the people of Wales.

[July 9, 1993]

Naval Reserve Association News

Arch-conservative Pat Schroeder, the hansdoodle of the House, tyrannizes the present with another of her *obligatos* from the hoary past:

Dear Friend:

Thank you for your thoughts on gays and lesbians in the military. I'm sorry for the form letter, but I'm swamped!

For most of our nation's history, sexual orientation was not only not a bar to military service, it wasn't even an issue. The present ban was imposed in 1982 when DoD Secretary Caspar Weinberger issued an order that tightened policy first established in the 1940s. The fact is, tens of thousands of gays and lesbians, banned or not, have served our country with distinction and valor in every war from the American Revolution to Operation Desert Storm.

One gay soldier, in particular, Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben, George Washington's inspector general and chief training officer, is perhaps worth mentioning. Known as the "drill master of the Revolution," von Steuben trained Washington's rag-tag Continental army during the winter at Valley Forge and turned it into a disciplined force. Military historian T. Harry Williams said that "thanks to [von Steuben], the American army took the field in 1778 prepared to fight."

Two hundred and twenty-five years later, some military leaders argue that gays are incompatible with military service. Hokum. As far as I'm concerned, what was good enough for George Washington is good enough for me.

[June 1993]

Flyer

In a flyer booming a forthcoming Montreal conference of the highest intellectual sonorities (titled "Yes to Self-Love" in the English version, or "Oui à la Masturbation" in the French), the disgusting contents of speaker Betty Dodson's disgusting thoughts are summoned from her diseased mind:

"My futuristic fantasy for sexual liberation goes like this: It is New Year's Eve 1999 . . . At the stroke of midnight, the entire population will be masturbating to orgasm for world peace."

[1993]

Washington Post

Glad tidings! The forward-looking dogmata of Dr. Joycelyn Elders, anointed by our Boy President to be surgeon general, have even been fetched by the noble swordsmen of the NBA:

On a Saturday afternoon in January four Trail Blazers—rookies Dave Johnson, Tracy Murray and Reggie Smith and nine-year veteran Jerome Kersey—met three teenage girls at a shopping mall in Salt Lake City.

With little to do until a Sunday afternoon, nationally televised game against the Utah Jazz, the players invited the girls to their team's hotel.

What happened on the 12th floor of the Salt Lake City Marriot that night became the subject of a police investigation. . . .

Although no charges were filed, the Trail Blazers fined Kersey and Smith $15,000 each and suspended Murray and Johnson for three games, costing them $46,500 and $38,300, respectively.

"They were disciplined for their involvement with underage women," said Petrie, the Trail Blazers' executive. "You need to be smarter than that, being up until 3 or 4 in the morning before an important game." . . .

Petrie said there was one encouraging sidelight to the incident. "In their testimony, the girls said the players used condoms," he said.

[June 13, 1993]

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Details

The chaos that ensues when within the mind of a rock-'n'-roll analyst the metaphysical, the poetic, the prophetic all well up together, and after the poor slob has overindulged his coffeebreak:

My capacity for outrage has been short-circuited. I'm trying to sharpen the knife with David Baewald's no-hope album *Triage* (cover: gruesomely bloody hands with the flag behind them), but not even that seems to be helping (or hurting). Our times are less fixed than they were a year ago; disaster may be no less likely, but it's no longer *obvious*. I think that Bill Clinton is an unfinished man; that the future, at least in the near term, is now unpredictable; that the next few years will be full of surprises, some of them thrilling. How all this will translate culturally—and specifically, musically—is up for grabs, but there is no question the Clinton presidency *will* translate.

[July 1993]

New York Times

On the editorial page of the venerable *Times*, proof again that there is no silliness too silly to elicit purple pontifications from a liberal with a word processor:

The most interesting question is whether, if they could, scientists *should* resurrect a dinosaur. After all, the nations of the world are scrambling to preserve species before they become extinct. So why not bring them back if they tip into oblivion?

In *Jurassic Park*, an entrepreneur wants the dinosaurs for an open-air zoo on an island off Central America. Profits aside, who wouldn't drool to see such magnificent creatures, study them up close, gawk in amazement?

But is anyone thinking of the welfare of the dinos? They would be brought back to face an environment far different from the one they dominated for 160 million years—with different air, plants and animal life. Even the fiercest dino could be felled by some tiny virus for which it lacked natural defenses.

And what about human welfare? The film leaves the impression that the monsters trashing the island would be containable with just a little better zoo keeping. But Mr. Crichton's book had a darker ending. When last heard from, the dinosaurs had escaped and were eating their way toward the rain forest; one just *knew* there would be further trouble.

[June 13, 1993]

Santa Barbara News-Press

The world perceived by a suspected survivor of Jim Jones's Jonestown, Mr. George Gaynes, what has just been to Europe for three whole months and come back sounding like the Rev. Michael Kinsley:

It is most comforting to come home to Santa Barbara after three months in Europe, and a steady diet of derogatory reports about the new presidency in the *International Herald Tribune*, to find so many letters to the *News-Press* supportive of the president and chiding the doomsayers, the rats who think the ship is sinking, the fair-weather friends of Bill, and the rest of the defeatists.

It is true that the political establishment, mostly Republican of course, would bring on economic Armageddon rather than go along with a rational, revolutionary, and refreshing reversal of handling the important issues, which endangers the business as usual routine of the entrenched protectors of industrial power, the wealthy, and the not-so-rich with dim awareness.

The prime minister of France, a conservative, faced with exactly the same economic situation and appointed by a conservative coalition of parties, is trying to enact the very same measures, give or take, that President Clinton is persuading Congress to adopt, and getting exactly the same flack for it, mostly from his own side.

A president who is compassionate, an intellectual, has public appeal, is attractive, fun, witty, plays music, and is, at the same time, a master politician is bound to rock the boat considerably in the fortress of custom, conservatism, and cupidity that is Washington, D.C.

A prophet in his own country always gets crucified.

[June 29, 1993]

Chicago Tribune

Mrs. Elizabeth Austin provides a rare glimpse into the inner sanctum of the Austin family where, as you can see, it is always think-think-think, talk-talk-talk, and pass the Librium and carrot juice:

At the fireworks this weekend, I'll be wearing a brand-new red, white and blue dress, bought especially for the occasion. When the orchestra at Grant Park plays "The Star-Spangled Banner," I will stand up and sing, with my right hand over my heart. And tomorrow morning, over breakfast, I will read the Declaration of Independence out loud. . . .

All this patriotism makes my husband squirm visibly. He can't understand how a liberal can be so enthusiastic about her country and flag. To him, flag-waving is the first step toward membership in the John Birch Society.

Like him, most liberals are uncomfortable with the paraphernalia of patriotism. We have a hard time keeping a straight face when the high school band marches past, playing a barely recognizable Sousa march. We chuckle knowingly when Roseanne Arnold screeches out the National Anthem, then grabs her crotch for an encore. And when a cynical politician wraps himself in the flag, we blame the flag as much as the man. . . .

Part of this, of course, goes to the heart of what it means to be a liberal. We liberals are an odd mixture of pessimism and optimism; we focus on the hole instead of the doughnut, but only because we can envision a future of doughnuts that are completely hole-free, for everybody. That makes it hard for us to feel completely at ease when it's time to salute the flag.

[July 3, 1993]

New York Times

Dr. Norman E. Rosenthal, man of science, proposes dramatic therapy for "summer blues":

The blues are more commonplace in winter, and behaviorists have found that deprivation of sunlight in the winter months can cause a form of depression labeled season affective disorder.

But more recently a condition that is believed to be caused by prolonged exposure to high heat and humidity has been described by researchers at the clinical psychobiology branch of the National Institute of Mental Health.

The "summer blues" cause sufferers to become lethargic and have difficulty functioning at work and home. . . . The problem is not a result of exposure to too much sunlight on long summer days, said Dr. Norman E. Rosenthal, a researcher at the mental health institute, but probably has to do with irregularities in areas of the brain, most notably the hypothalamus, that help regulate body temperature.

Just as the winter malady can be cleared up with exposure to artificial sunlight, the summer blues can be chased away if individuals cool down by remaining in air-conditioned environments or spending summers in colder climates, he said.

[July 18, 1993]

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Reunion

I recently went to a field day at my tenth Harvard reunion, where the classes congregate in a row of tents lined up chronologically by class. A walk from, say, the '88 tent to the '33 tent is a walk from what you were to what you will become. It's also a good way of gauging how successive generations measure up to one another. Such appraisals always verge on tendentiousness, but they can be tested empirically against the surveys each reunion class mails out. Over 50 percent of alums respond, so you wind up with some figures that are of considerable—if hardly infallible—statistical significance. Some highlights:

The Class of '68 had its twenty-fifth reunion this year. Sixty-eight, of course, *the* hippie class, is a tempting target, given their tendency to talk like free spirits and act like snobs, tightwads, and prudes. Fully a quarter of the class are millionaires. Only one in ten has a net worth under $100,000. One in five makes over $300,000 a year. A fifth of the men are lawyers and a fifth doctors. Eighty-six percent give less than a tenth of their income to charity.

A third are atheists. Only 1 percent smoke a pack a day or more, and fewer than half have three drinks a week. Among women, 91 percent voted for Clinton, and 30 percent have had abortions.

That only 3-4 percent describe themselves as homosexual seems a particular embarrassment for *New York Times* journalist Linda Greenhouse '68, who introduced the survey ("gay and Lesbian members of the class are almost certainly underrepresented . . ."). So many in this generation regularly faulted those of us who went to school in the 1980s for lacking "empathy" and "idealism" that it is hard to suppress one's mirth at the news that the Harvard respondents to the Class of '68 survey are *1 percent black* (and Radcliffe '68 is *zero* percent black). In a telling show of arrogance, 68 percent said their "personal development" was greater than that of their same-gender parent, while only 6 percent said it was less—a pretty uncharitable assessment of the generation that not only survived the Depression and fought World War II, but even put these little snobs through college.

The Class of '78 has a more detailed survey, particularly on politics (compiled by Karen Falkenstein Green '78, chief of staff for Massachusetts Governor William Weld '66). A kind word for the class's political opinions would be schizophrenic. Three quarters (87 percent of women) believe Anita Hill more than Clarence Thomas; yet in response to the question "In order to reduce the federal deficit, Congress should first . . ." 68 percent say "reduce spending," while only 23 percent say "raise taxes." The class is split on whether political correctness is "the new McCarthyism" or "positive" (women like it 52-31; men don't, 56-37). Most favor term limits. But here's the old arrogance again: 81 percent describe their "political and cultural opinions and beliefs" as "more sophisticated than mainstream America's."

Now, my class: Between 1968 and 1983, Harvardians moved far to what passes here for the right. Only 71 percent of us voted for Clinton (and a mere 84 percent of women). Atheism plummeted to a bare 18 percent. Average number of sex partners took a steep dive to fifteen, from a high of nineteen in the Class of '78. (Who drove down the curve?)

Yet by a 56-44 percentage, those in my class identified with the generation before us more than the generation after. In many ways we were the lees of the sixties crowd. We got to college in 1979, the peak year for marijuana use on campus, and dabbled in drugs, only to discover on graduating that there was a War on Them. We arrived at Harvard with guitars, and graduated into a world of personal computers. We entered with the sexual revolution going full-bore, ran into herpes in college, and soon realized that that wasn't the half of it. (Half have lost a friend to AIDS, and the class report is filled with HIV-positives.)

In retrospect, the first half of the 1980s may have been the heyday of classical liberalism in this country—with taxes dropping and the Scylla and Charybdis of strident moralism and p.c. still over the horizon. I am so grateful to have spent my college years in that interregnum that I cannot speak of it without sentimentality. Perhaps I flatter my classmates, but it seems that something left us a bit less insufferable than our predecessors. These autobiographical sketches from my class report aren't wholly atypical:

> In March, I returned to San Francisco and gave birth to our first child. . . . The next week I lost my job . . . The next day, our car was stolen in Oakland. . . .
>
> But you know what? None of it really mattered. . . . In the last ten years, the blessings of marriage and motherhood overshadow all the rest.

> [My wife] and I are highly religiously active, and moderately politically active. I think the experience of having children . . . has proven to us the wisdom of the traditional Christian morality that we espoused—sometimes blatantly—when at Harvard. At times the shocking intolerance of the College toward those who share my conservative leanings makes me unwilling to express any gratitude for the institution and to support it financially. But it served a gracious purpose by placing [my future wife] and me in Thayer North in the fall of 1979, and that is sufficient to rekindle in me an affectionate, if strained, regard for the greatest place of learning on Earth.

Maybe that puts us in too good a light. For every write-up like the ones above there are two that mention "parenting" as "an experience I highly recommend" or "a satisfying challenge for me" or "a real growing experience for me" (*me, me, me*). Fortunately for us, our survey included no questions that would have measured arrogance, such as "Are you a better person in the eyes of God than your parents?"

As Linda Greenhouse suggests elsewhere in her '68 report, someone should have put that question to the parents.

—Christopher Caldwell

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